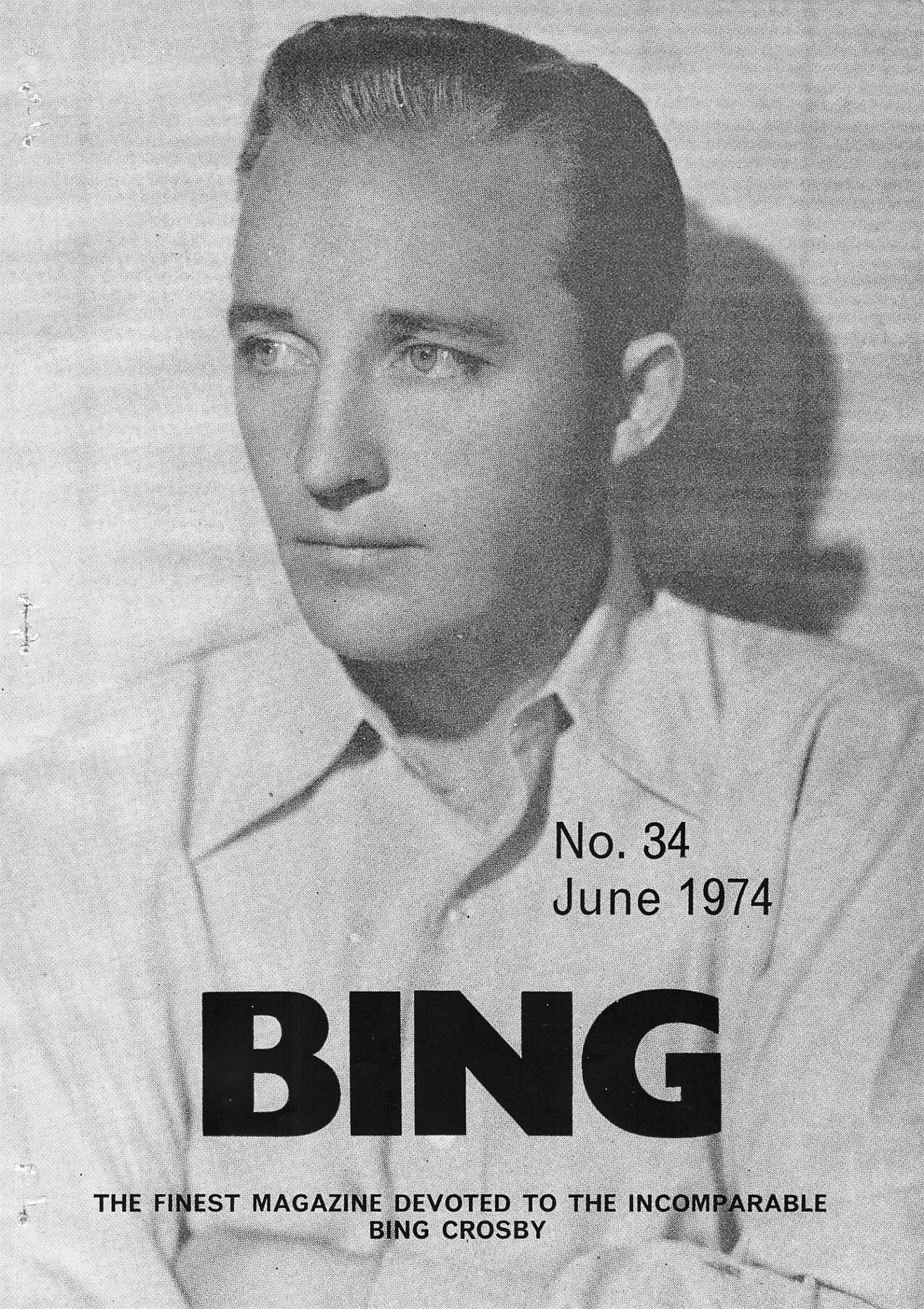


A black and white portrait of Bing Crosby, looking slightly to the left. He has dark hair styled back and is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, shirt. The background is a textured, light gray.

No. 34
June 1974

BING

THE FINEST MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INCOMPARABLE
BING CROSBY

ISSUE 34

BING

JUNE 1974

Hon. President:
BING CROSBY

THE
**INTERNATIONAL
CROSBY CIRCLE**

Hon. Vice-President:
LARRY CROSBY

Secretary:

REG BRISTO, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Monmouthshire, NP4 3NR

Publicity Officers:

BOB ROBERTS, 56 Thorold Road, Chatham, Kent

LESLIE GAYLOR, 114 Medina Avenue, Newport, Isle of Wight

LEE ARGENT, 365 Somercotes, Laindon, Basildon, Essex

Editor:

JOHN BASSETT

"Bingville"

72 Stromness Road

Southend-on-Sea

Essex

SS2 4JQ

"BING"

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Films and TV Consultant:

BERT BISHOP, "Tideway", Imperial Avenue, Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 6AJ

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N O W A V A I L A B L E

THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY 1926-1974

Every member now has the long-awaited opportunity to acquire a completely revised and up-dated discography showing every title in order of recording, together with matrix and 'take' numbers and supplementary information. The Mini-Discography is guaranteed to become one of the most valuable reference books in your collection and the front of the book sports the very fine head-and-shoulders photograph of Bing as used for the cover of this magazine. The book is likely to sell very quickly and readers are advised to send their remittance immediately upon receipt of this issue of "BING".

THE PRICE IS ONLY 45p PER COPY (POST PAID) from Reg Bristo, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Monmouthshire, NP4 3NR. Please make all cheques, postal orders and IMO's payable to the International Crosby Circle.

EDITORIAL

I'm using this month's editorial to welcome a large number of new members whose names have long been synonymous with Crosby collecting but for some reason or another have not been added to the ICC's membership file. It's my guess that many staunch ISCC members are beginning to realise that "BING" is hailed as the premier Crosby magazine in the United Kingdom, and with the virtual demise of our rival magazine we are now the sole publishers of all information relating to Bing's record releases and radio/TV appearances.

In 1972 and 1973 this magazine was proud to publish exclusive write-ups of the "PARKINSON" show preparations, and the mammoth 14-part radio serialisation of Bing's life and times. Additionally, we have fully reviewed over 50 new record releases featuring Bing within the past 6 issues! If you don't consider this worth your £1.30 annual subscription then you shouldn't be reading this editorial! We're proud of the magazine and we know that our readers are too. Once again, thanks go to the fine efforts of our contributing members.

 * So many kind, encouraging words *
 * and prayers came during my illness *
 * I just had to get well! *
 * Many thanks *
 * Bing Crosby *

Most members will have already received one of these 'thankyou' cards from Bing (as reproduced at the foot of the previous page). For those who haven't, the wording was printed in dark blue embossed 'script', with a facsimile of Bing's signature in the lower right-hand corner. The card was of a single-fold 'landscape' variety, enabling it to be displayed in a standing position. At least one of the cards (received by member Edward Hale) was enclosed in a handwritten envelope, the writing of which bore a close resemblance to that of Bing and Kathryn (both are similar) but it is more likely to be that of one of the hard-working secretaries who assisted in sending out many thousands of these cards to Bing's well-wishers throughout the world.

GUINNESS DOES YOU A POWER OF GOOD! (see also pages 17-21)

Members will have read in "BING"-33 (pages 46-47) that Bob Roberts' remarkable 20 minute broadcast was a direct result of Radio Medway seeing the Guinness Book entry. It gives your editor great personal satisfaction in knowing that but for my initial action in getting Bob the recognition he so rightly deserves, the basis for such a programme might never have been conceived. It was in January 1972 when I wrote to Norris D. McWhirter, suggesting that he should contact Bob about such an entry in the world-famous Guinness Book. A reply, dated 11th January, informed me that I had put them on the track of an interesting item, and with the publication in October 1972 of their 19th edition, the following item appeared in the same paragraph relating to Bing's recording achievements:

The greatest collection of Crosbiana by
Mr. Bob Roberts of Chatham, Kent includes
1,677 records.

Bob wrote to me soon afterwards offering his sincere thanks for my efforts, adding, "It's a pity they spelt Crosbyana wrong!"

BEST WISHES

JOHN BASSETT

S T I L L A V A I L A B L E

"THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY"

A few copies of this invaluable book are still available. The Bing Crosby LP-ography is the first of its kind issued to Crosby collectors anywhere and comprises a representative listing of Bing's LP's released between the early 1950's and Christmas 1973. All known re-issues and overseas equivalents are shown where applicable and the entire booklet (over 80 pages) is enclosed in an attractive cover. There is also a special introduction written by Bing himself.

The price is £1 (post paid) from Reg Bristo, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Monmouthshire, NP4 3NR. Please make all cheques, postal orders and IMO's payable to the International Crosby Circle.

A very limited number of copies of our earlier publication "THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY" are also still available from Reg Bristo. For the interest of new members, this publication presented every commercially issued title by Bing in alphabetical order, and also listed every vocal and musical accompanist who have appeared with him on records. A mammoth project which was highly acclaimed by Bing at the time of its appearance. Compiled by Bert Bishop and John Bassett, it was specially prepared with blank right-hand pages to enable members to enter details of their own collections alongside the titles. The price of this book is also £1, post paid, from the Secretary.

These, and future publications, are available only to members of the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE - the finest organisation of its kind for collectors and appreciators of the incomparable Bing who celebrated his 73rd birthday last month on Thursday, 2nd May.

ERIC DOES US PROUD!

First, a letter from Bing followed by an incredible radio interview....

ERIC CROWDER (Wollaton, Nottingham) writes:

I wrote to Bing in early April enquiring about his health and explaining that I had recently joined the ICC, first by writing to Charlie Chester at the BBC who in turn gave me the address of Leslie Gaylor. Leslie very kindly gave me your address, John, and then, of course, I joined your wonderful organisation. At this stage I would like to pay tribute to the many corresponding friends I have made in the short time I've been associated with the ICC, namely yourself, Leslie Gaylor, Bob Roberts, Bert Bishop and many others. It's certainly a great comfort to be in touch with so many hard-working fans of Bing, and I'm sure he appreciates all the efforts made by the aforementioned, as his reference to Leslie Gaylor proves. A miracle was surely bestowed upon us when Bing recovered from his serious lung infection, and I'm sure that all members would like to read his reply to my letter....

April 5, 1974

Dear Eric:

Thanks for your very kind letter and for your solicitous inquiries about my surgery and illness.

It's coming along fine now, and I should be really as good as new in another few weeks. Back on the golf course.

I certainly was deeply appreciative of all the kind messages I received from my friends over in England.

I am pleased to know that you are an active member now of the ICC and that you've gotten in touch with Leslie Gaylor. He has been indefatigable through the years doing things on my behalf over there in England, and I'm tremendously grateful to him.

Again, my warmest thanks and best wishes -

As ever,
(signed) Bing
Bing Crosby

Although ERIC CROWDER has only been with the ICC since Christmas 1973, his sterling work in publicising the society can be proclaimed as a fine example to every one of our members. It was in April of this year that he wrote to RADIO NOTTINGHAM requesting that a record should be played on Bing's birthday. It came as quite a surprise when Sharon Ferry, an announcer at the BBC, telephoned Eric at home suggesting that he should go along to the recording studios to tape an interview for broadcasting on 2nd May. The dedication to Bing was given the title of 'A Special Day' and was introduced by Tony Church in the following manner:

TONY CHURCH: "The reason why Bing Crosby has had one or two mentions this morning already is that today is Bing's birthday. Now officially he's 70, although there are some schools of thought that make him slightly older, but we've checked up in our own American encyclopaedia and that makes him 70, although there could be about a couple of years in the difference that some sources quote, including Charlie Chester on a Radio-2 programme last year who made him a little older. But we're going to stick to 70 which I think is fair enough because it's the chap's birthday and 70 is what he officially admits to. Well it's a day of some rejoicing for members of the International Crosby Circle, and one of these is Mr. Eric Crowder of Wollaton who first drew our attention to the fact that indeed it is Bing's birthday today. Now Mr. Crowder only became a member of the Circle fairly recently but it's really

changed his whole way of life because now he reads the club's magazines and indeed he's asked for back numbers going back to when they first started. He spends quite a bit on tapes and records, and he also wears a Bing tie, so it's very obvious that he's a Bing fan. But although he's a newcomer to the Circle he's been a fan of Bing Crosby for years and years, and Sharon Ferry asked him how and when this affection started...."

ERIC: Well, it seems very many years ago, in fact it was in Nottingham at the 'Odeon', when the 'Odeon' cinema was first opened, and there was a film there that was on and it was called 'ANYTHING GOES'. I went in to see this film and I'm afraid I was hooked right away, and I've been a fan ever since....and that's a number of years now, isn't it!

SHARON: And have you seen all his films?

ERIC: Yes - I've seen every film he's made....oh yes, every film - and some of them more than once.

SHARON: And what's your favourite?

ERIC: I think it's a very difficult question....very difficult. Of course, he got an Academy Award for 'GOING MY WAY' and I suppose this was probably one of his best acting performances.

SHARON: Do you prefer him as a singer or an actor?

ERIC: Well, to me he's the greatest, of course. He's the 'king of song', but also I like his personality....I think he's terrific. He's got an easy-going attitude that I think we would all like to have in life, and everything seems to come to him easy. He seems to be a 'hell of a fellow' and people that have met him say he's just the same off the screen. I wrote him a letter and he very kindly replied. It's amazing that a man of his status always seems to find time for everyone that writes....to think that this man, despite all his activity, and let's face it, the age of the man, how he can personally reply to anyone who shows any interest in his career. He plays golf as well which makes him a friend of mine!

SHARON: What about his records? He seems to have sold a phenomenal number.

ERIC: Yes - I believe the latest figure is in excess of 400 million records.

SHARON: And what's his favourite record?

ERIC: His favourite?....well, he's been asked this many times. Obviously the greatest selling record that he's made is "White Christmas" and I believe he's said in an interview that he must say "White Christmas" it's made him a lot of money!

SHARON: And what's your favourite one?

ERIC: I think "Where the Blue of the Night" - his signature tune. The first thing I ever heard him sing was this song and it's always been a favourite of mine.

SHARON: And have you got an extensive collection of his songs?

ERIC: Yes - I've got quite a collection of records - LPs, old 78's - and many tapes. I've even covered the latest 'Daybreak' record which he's made.

"TIE A YELLOW RIBBON ROUND THE OLD OAK TREE" was then played.

TONY CHURCH: "Well, there you are, Bing fans - and particularly Mr. E. G. Crowder of Appledore Avenue, Wollaton, who asked particularly that we should play that one because he said it would bring pleasure to all members of the International Crosby Circle. I reckon if anybody was anxious to follow Mr. Crowder's example and join the International Crosby Circle, they could simply get in touch with Mr. Crowder, and I'm sure he'd be delighted to put them in touch with the headquarters."

EDITOR's comment: Eric informs us that the broadcast proved extremely popular with friends and relatives in Nottingham, and within 24 hours over a dozen interested people had telephoned, asking for details of the ICC. We offer Eric our sincere thanks for the particularly fine 'plug'.

=====

....and even more publicity for the ICC, but this time nearer home. See page 30 of this issue!

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 @ KEEPING TRACK @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

BERT BISHOP, COLIN PUGH and JOHN BASSETT review the latest record releases featuring Bing.

Once again, we have a goodly selection of LP's to mull over, browse through, and take a longer look at. Nothing earth shattering, as most of them are re-issues, but it is very gratifying to know that Bing is still very much an essential part of a major company's catalogue, and to see him popping up in various parts of the globe on all manner of minor labels.

When the news broke that "THE BEST OF BING" (MCF 2540) had been released in the UK it caused little stir within the breasts of the dedicated collectors within these Isles - for had they not already on their shelves the double-LP album of that title as released in the States; apart from which the songs thereon were doubtless duplicated in many speeds and sizes within their collections?

However, as sightings of the release were made upon the record shop display counters and racks, or news of the totally different presentation began to filter through, it became apparant that financial considerations must needs be cast aside to add this further compilation of the Bing songs that everybody knows to the collection. Honestly, how can you bypass a newly presented LP that sports a couple of full 12" by 12" photographs of the Old Groaner on the sleeve and offers 20 stereo effect tracks of his songs that will live forever, and all at around 11 pence a track? Not this reviewer!

To get down to basics let's first list the tracks; and let it be noted that all the titles are given in full, including title extensions, on the sleeve as well as on the record label:

Side One

Where the blue of the night
 Swinging on a star
 You are my sunshine
 It's been a long, long time
 MacNamara's band
 Sweet Leilani
 I'm an old cowhand
 Pennies from heaven
 Don't fence me in
 White Christmas

Side Two

Mexicali rose
 The Whiffenpoof song
 I can't begin to tell you
 Play a simple melody
 Dear hearts and gentle people
 Galway Bay
 In the cool, cool of the evening
 Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral
 Sam's song
 Now is the hour

Spanning 15 years - 1936 to 1951 - with a predominance of 'forties' waxings, it will be seen from the titles that most aspects of Bing on record, in the popular sense, are represented. Ballads, Hawaiian, Irish, Western to Varsity, they're all there - duets, groups and choruses; up-tempo, singalongs and sentimental: and just to prove the point of the album title, 13 of the 20 are officially recognised million or multi-million sellers for which Bing has been awarded Gold Records! Although, for accuracy, it should be noted that the 1942 version of "White Christmas" is the one that reached the million mark and for which the Gold Disc was presented. The 1947 waxing was re-made as identically as possible, as the original master was showing signs of wear! To the uninitiated the difference is minimal enough to go unnoticed, but for those who care a detailed comparison was made by the Editor on page 15 of "BING"-29.

The stereophonic enhancement has become more acceptable with familiarity and is expertly created in this instance - "Where the blue of the night" sets the mood straight away and few would deny the added appeal of the song by the 'enhancement' when played on the proper equipment. I've heard it described as echo; but this is a misnomer for a sound that fills the room with such melodious resonance. It must also be accepted that non-stereo records are virtually non-sellers in this day and age, and personally I'm all for it.

The sleeve hits you straight in the eye at first sight: a 1947 photograph of Bing standing at the microphone, battered trilby set at a jaunty angle and the inevitable recording session pencil stuck 'reporter like' under the brim over his left ear. Note the rubber on the end of the pencil - doubtless to erase a few fluffed notes or words that Bing ad libs his way out of from

time to time! In point of fact this is only half a photograph; in the bottom left-hand corner can be seen the sheet music which is being held by none other than Al Jolson: however, this is all Bing, casual, relaxed and grinning from 'wingy' ear to 'wingy' ear. Just take a look at that open-necked chequered shirt - I've never seen this picture in colour, and it's all black and white here, but you can bet your bottom dollar that it would put a rainbow to shame and probably clashes with odd matched socks just for good measure. The best of Bing as Bing is best known.

Turning the sleeve over reveals a studio portrait of the maestro; immaculately dressed and the suggestion of a Mona Lisa smile just about to break at the corners of his mouth. It is the same photograph that has been used for the comparatively recent issue of the DECCA brochure that listed every currently available LP and pre-recorded tape featuring Bing (distributed free with copies of "BING" in 1973). All the lettering on the sleeve is in gold; the titles being set neatly down the left-hand side of the rear sleeve, noting the playing times of each track and giving composer and publisher credits to every song. The label to the record is the most physically colourful part of the entire presentation - it even boasts an error! The titles are again set in gold on black, with copyright wording displayed clearly in white lettering around the edge of the label. 'MCA RECORDS' appears in pale blue, and the broad spectrum of a portion of a rainbow founds its base at the hole in the middle - at the bottom of which is truly a pot of gold! The error? Well, Lani McIntire is credited with his Hawaiins, and not, as it should be, Hawaiians.

Definitely an album not to be missed, even if you only frame the sleeve and mount it on your Crosby den wall!

Before leaving the inherent implications of this disc insofar as the popularity of the songs contained on it are concerned it would be worth noting, as has been suggested by some members, that a listing of all Bing's Gold Records be presented in chronological order. Bing has said that he rounded out twenty with his 1956 recording of "True love" (with Grace Kelly); however, most discographers will agree that the figure is actually 22, and could be counted as 25 or more actual titles if the reverse side of three 78's and an LP which were extremely popular, are taken into consideration.

The recordings for which Bing has been officially credited with million or multi-million sales, and therefore Gold Record Awards, are as follows:

- 1) 1937 Sweet Leilani
- 2) 1941 San Antonio Rose
- 3) 1942 Silent night/Adeste fideles
- 4) 1942 White Christmas (later figures include the 1947 master)
- 5) 1943 I'll be home for Christmas
- 6) 1943 Sunday, Monday or always (with Max Terr Choir only)
- 7) 1943 Pistol packin' mama (with The Andrews Sisters)
- 8) 1943 Jingle bells (with The Andrews Sisters)
- 9) 1944 Don't fence me in (with The Andrews Sisters)
- 10) 1944 Swinging on a star (with The Williams Brothers)
- 11) 1945 Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral
- 12) 1945 I can't begin to tell you
- 13) 1946 McNamara's band (with the Jesters)
- 14) 1946 South America, take it away (with The Andrews Sisters)
- 15) 1947 Alexander's ragtime band/The Spaniard that blighted my life (with Al Jolson)
- 16) 1947 The Whiffenpoof song (with Fred Waring)
- 17) 1947 Now is the hour
- 18) 1947 Galway Bay
- 19) 1948 'MERRY CHRISTMAS' LP
- 20) 1949 Dear hearts and gentle people
- 21) 1950 Sam's song/Play a simple melody (with Gary Crosby)
- 22) 1956 True love (with Grace Kelly)

As most members will be aware, EMI have taken over from DECCA the 'CORAL' label and the issue or re-issue of any other Bing material. All the CORALS (with the exception, possibly, of CP 45 "CLUB DURANT") have been re-issued with new catalogue numbers as follows:

CRL 1079 (formerly CPS 79) "I LOVE YOU TRULY"
 CRL 1080 (formerly CPS 80) "BING CROSBY AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS", Vol.1
 CRL 1081 (formerly CPS 81) "RHYTHM ON THE RANGE"
 CRL 1099 (formerly CPS 90) "I'LL SING YOU A SONG OF THE ISLANDS"
 CRL 1100 (formerly CPS 91) "BING CROSBY AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS", Vol.2
 CRL 1102 (formerly CPS 105) "BING AND THE DIXIELAND BANDS"
 CRL 1105 (formerly CPS 112) "BING CROSBY AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS", Vol.3
 CRL 1106 (formerly CPS 113) "DAY DREAMING"
 CRLM 1026 (formerly CP 26) "SONGS I WISH I HAD SUNG"
 CRLM 1059 (formerly CP 98) "HOLLYWOOD SINGS", Vol.3

The sleeve covers and notes are identical except for the new number and Company address - at least, that is the information as conveyed by EMI via a telephone enquiry at the time these reviews are written. As some of the latest of these albums were only available for a very short time it is welcome news that they are once more on the record shop shelves - certainly it will be of interest to overseas members who may have had some difficulty in obtaining the originals.

On the MCA label comes yet another copy of the original "A CHRISTMAS SING WITH BING (AROUND THE WORLD)" from a Christmas Day CBS radio programme broadcast in 1955. This latest version is entitled "CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD" and has the catalogue number MCFM 2607. It seems an unseasonal time of the year to release such an album, but with the lengthy waiting time required for most things these days it might just be in the shops for the Yuletide season!

Another re-issue turns up on a hitherto unknown Italian label called 'NAPOLEON', number NLP 11007. The title is simply "BING CROSBY" and the content is the same as the 'ACE OF HEARTS' AH 90 "AMONG MY SOUVENIRS" except that the titles have been arranged in a different sequence.

The Spanish 'COBRA' label produced this album last year - in stereo. Quite hard to get; so this one may fall into the rare collector's item category, too. Whether it is stereophonically enhanced is not known at the time of 'going to press', but it would seem to be more than likely.

Perhaps even more interesting for the collector would be the Japanese RCA-VICTOR release, "THE BIX BEIDERBECKE LEGEND" on RA 5298. It is identical in content to previous UK and US equivalents (refer to the LP-OGRAPHY for details) but may well have a new sleeve to tempt the appreciators of the young Bing in great company. Apart from the Bing content, the remainder of the album features Bix with Jean Goldkette and his Orchestra, Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, Hoagy Carmichael and his Orchestra, and Beiderbecke's own Orchestra.

Still globe trotting reveals that a further 'STAR-TONE' radio air-shot LP featuring Bing has been produced by that Stateside company: entitled "CALLING ALL STARS", ST-203, it has as track 3 on side 1, Bing duetting with Humphrey Bogart a little ditty with the salty tang title of "The bold fisherman". These LP's are not cheap and for the very limited Bing content on most of them are 'space fillers', to make use of a philatelic term. Most of this material must be available on taped radio programmes of Bing's shows, or those on which he guests. However, there is always the bonus of other artistes in whom the purchaser may be interested.

Limited news drifts in of another 'WINDMILL' release featuring Bing with Louis Armstrong, and we are led to believe that this is a re-issue of the company's earlier album (itself a re-issue of a 'FAMILY' album), namely "LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND BING CROSBY ON STAGE". The latest presentation is featured on 'WINDMILL's SOLID GOLD SIXTY series, WSR 20. From the 'S' in the catalogue number it would suggest a stereo album.

We conclude by thanking all members who have kindly contributed information to this special section of the magazine. More reviews in September's issue!

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 @ CELLULOID CROSBY @ by KEITH PARKINSON
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

One disadvantage of having lived at four different addresses over a period of five years has been to find that films shown on commercial television follow me around. This accounts for my having seen "RIDING HIGH" twice in 18 months. I found it to be a disappointing film with many good points. Perhaps I expected more from director Frank Capra, whose warmly sentimental films "MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON", "MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN" and "YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU" held me riveted to my television set. "RIDING HIGH" had some good things going for it though. The music was something special - the tuneful "Whiffenpoof Song", the brilliantly executed "Sunshine Cake" and the rousing "The Horse Told Me". Also on the credit side were appearances by supporting actors of the calibre of Oliver Hardy, Ward Bond, Margaret Hamilton, Joe Frisco and Percy Kilbride. On reflection I suppose the film was a very good movie but the combined talents of those involved led me to expect more than I got.

The press was also divided as the following extracts from newspaper reviews at the time of the film's release show:

"A joyous celluloid occasion that will be celebrated by ticket buyers with the same enthusiasm it is played...."
(Hollywood Reporter)

"The most shrewdly effective show ever put together about horse racing...."
(Time)

"RIDING HIGH (from riches to nags with Bing Crosby) catches some of the jumpy, messy, half-optimistic energy seen around racetracks, but leaves you feeling that you've been taken like the carnival sucker. For instance, the movie drools with democratic pride in Crosby's sugary relationship with his colored stableboy, displaying a sashaying negro named 'Whitey' whose happy slave personality, sambo dialect (Hallelujah), rapid expressions of unctuous love are derived from an old stencil cut from the deepest kind of prejudice...."
(Manny Farber, Nation)

Farber's racist smear was not a typical reviewer's reaction, and in fact Lillian Scott's evaluation in Chicago's negro publication the "DEFENDER" could relate to a different film to the one Farber saw:

"Paramount has a blue-ribbon winner in the new horse racing film RIDING HIGH, starring Bing Crosby, and famed director Frank Capra has allowed Clarence Muse to act without the eye-rolling and "Yassah, Boss" approach he's previously had to use....go see it and take the kids by all means".

When Paramount were considering suitable roles for forthcoming Crosby films they had "FRIENDLY PERSUASION" in mind, which Frank Capra was to direct. The part that Bing was to play went to Gary Cooper in the mid-fifties but Capra was retained by Paramount and a re-make of his 1934 film of "BROADWAY BILL" resulted. The reason for the remake, retitled "RIDING HIGH", is worth relating. In 1948 Box Office receipts were on the decline in the USA following the immediate post-war boom and the introduction of television. Paramount president Barney Balaban believed that a reduction in a film's budget would ensure profits did not reduce in relation to the shrinking audience. One way of cutting costs was to film a previous film success. At about the same time that Balaban put his policy into operation Columbia Pictures owned negative rights to "BROADWAY BILL" and wanted a story called "A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION" owned by Liberty Films, an independent producing company which Paramount released. A straight swop resulted and Balaban approved the one and a half million dollar project of "RIDING HIGH" which was budgeted so low because the expensive race sequences and other scenes from the old film could be used. Bing himself also wanted to make the film and put pressure to bear on Paramount.

One curious fact emerges when comparisons are made with the original film. Warner Baxter played the Bing role in the 1934 production and Baxter was

terrified of being bitten or kicked by a horse whereas Bing loved horses.

Director Frank Capra had praise indeed for the film's leading man when he stated:

"Bing Crosby is not an easy man to know. In virtually everything he does - golf, acting, crooning, and, I imagine, necking - he is as relaxed as a cat stretched out in the sun. But if you let that lazy, old-shoe casualness fool you into thinking that Bingle doesn't know what's going on - you're living in a dream world. His wit can devastate you, and what's more, you can't see it coming.

In his coordination Crosby is in a class by himself. Most actors must stop everything they are doing with their hands, or with props, in order to deliver an important speech. Crosby can recite the Gettysburg address while juggling three balls and listening to hope crack toupee jokes.

Crosby is blessed with a photographic mind. He can learn a two-page speech by reading it twice. And usually whatever he changes or adds in the speech is better than what is written. For he is the master of the literary ad lib".

The film's musical highspot must be the "Sunshine Cake" routine. The pages of this magazine have been used in the past to explain the technique of vocalists pre-recording their musical contributions and subsequently miming to those recordings when the scene is shot. (See pages 3 to 5 of "BING"-22). Part of the success of the "Sunshine Cake" sequence can be put down to the spontaneous gaiety gained by Bing, Clarence Muse and Colleen Gray simply singing and making music without having to concentrate on synchronizing mouth actions to fit words from the playback loudspeakers. As befitted the occasion of an impromptu session in a beat-up barn, the musical accompaniment was non-orchestral. Bing learned to play two spoons as a pair of bones after tuition from Freeman "Mr. Bones" Davis of New York. Clarence Muse obliged with guitar and an empty box as a base drum whilst a rooster and a horse added to the general cacophony. All the other songs from the film were recorded directly, including "Camptown Races". The scene where this was sung towards the end of the picture by Bing, Clarence Muse and Colleen Gray as they walked towards the race track was engineered by a pre-recorded band record of "Camptown Races" being played over a loud speaker a block away to give the eventual effect of the music being played by a band at the race track. At one stage it is known that Bing was slightly dubious about the recording of the songs without conventional musical direction by Victor Young but he eventually enjoyed making the film as the following report from the 'Los Angeles Express' of April 11th, 1949 shows:

"Bing Crosby was in a very gay mood when I visited the set of RIDING HIGH. He loves this remake of "BROADWAY BILL", and he loves working for Frank Capra....Bing is a great ad libber. He reads the dialogue differently almost every time. I asked Capra if this bothers him. 'Not a bit', says Frank. 'The things he says are better than what's written'."

Film publicists must have worked really hard in those days to ensure that even the most trivial detail would enjoy press exposure and so help promotion of the film. The 'Los Angeles Mirror' of September 5th, 1949 carried a long report dealing solely with the technique used in persuading a rooster to crow for a particular scene in the picture. Allegations were made at the time the film was made that Bing was being uncooperative with the press so perhaps that's why crowing roosters had to be publicised. Lucy Kay Miller of the 'Chicago Tribune' had this to say about Bing's reticence with the press:

"Crosby is often called uncooperative", remarked producer-director Frank Capra, "but he isn't. The trouble is - his toupee. Or 'my bowser' as Bing calls it - my assistant Art Black calls it 'Bing's brain doiley'. Bing hates to wear his brain doiley when not before cameras, but on the other hand, he hates to be photographed in public without it. So rather than boorishly refusing to take off his hat, he tries to stay out of the limelight as much as possible".

The aforementioned Arthur Black did not hold a high opinion of Bing. Bing's reputation apparently went before him and Black warned the director of "RIDING HIGH" of late starts and early finishes, usually for the purposes of playing golf. Black's prophecies came true and the first few days' shooting began without Bing. However, matters improved when Bing asked the reason for the commencement of the day's shooting without his presence and was told of Paramount president Barney Balaban's edict that the $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollar budget must not be exceeded, which meant a shooting schedule not exceeding 40 days. Arthur Black was to revise his opinion of Bing when the latter began to arrive at the studio at 6 a.m. to view the previous day's rushes.

Further cooperation by Bing above and beyond the call of duty centres around ten days location shooting at Tanforan Race Track and the scenes dealing with the burial of the horse 'Broadway Bill'. The funeral was shown in the film as taking place at dawn and shooting was scheduled for the afternoon between 6 and 8 p.m. to obtain the simulated dawn lighting. The first day of shooting produced wonderful atmospheric weather - a 30 mile an hour wind and small clouds scudding across a flat sky. Of course it was folly to hope that weather conditions would be the same on the next two days and Bing rallied cast and crew to enable the sequence to be shot in one day. No doubt this incident helped the film to be completed under schedule and under budget.

GIGGLING THROUGH LIFE WITH THE OLD GROANER

The following edited article appeared in the 'DAILY MAIL' last month, written by Sally Brompton....

"The night before Bing had to go into hospital to have surgery, we had a splendid evening together", says Kathryn Crosby. "We both thought it was cancer, but we never mentioned it. We spent the evening chatting about the children and his golf and what I should do with 400 dollars worth of Italian straw animals I'd bought by mistake. Then the next day he packed, and I drove him to the hospital. And when it was time for him to be operated on, we just said: 'See you later', and we went to six o'clock Mass at our little church. Fortunately it just turned out to be athlete's foot of the lung, which was pretty stupid and unromantic, really...."

In fact Bing, who went into hospital last New Year's Eve, had two-fifths of his left lung removed, including an abscess the size of a small orange.

"Bing is a deeply religious man and very stoic", says his wife. "He was worried when he first went in because he didn't know what was the matter. But he was a wonderful patient. But going into hospital had to be his own decision. I didn't try to get him to do anything. I love him - that's my role in Bing's life. I don't take care of him. Nobody in the world can ever make Bing do anything. He can't make me do anything, either, which upsets him considerably. I learnt that from him."

Kathryn continues, "I love him. I want him to do well, whatever he does. I'm his girlfriend, his wife, his friend".

They lead a staid middle-aged sort of life. "We all have breakfast every morning at 7.30. After breakfast Bing does his mail, and we have time to talk. One of the most precious parts of our day is afternoon tea. We have tea and toast, and Bing has one cookie and I finish the rest. If I'm not working we watch telly together after dinner, and if there's a ball game on we watch it during dinner, and Bing and Nathaniel discuss statistics and scores, and Harry, Mary Frances and I discuss music and art and giggle a lot."

When Bing's feeling madly in love with Kathryn he takes her hunting or fishing. And when he's really enamoured, he gives her a shove on the shoulder and says, "You're OK." "And for Bing", Kathryn says, "that's pure passion".

 ** "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" (1926-1974) is now available from
 ** the Secretary, only 45 pence, post-paid. Send for a copy today!
 **

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 @ HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES? @ by the EDITOR
 @@@

"Pressure of work" is primarily the reason why 1973 (and, to date, half of 1974) has come and gone with neither sight nor sound of our rival magazine, 'THE CROSBY COLLECTOR'. Ralph Harding, editor of that journal, can be excused on the grounds that his involvement in other projects has left him little time for magazine work. Rumour has it that the "now defunct" CROSBY COLLECTOR (to quote a recent correspondent) is once again poised to explode upon an unsuspecting world, providing its originator can secure the services of an assistant editor. In his advert on page 48 of "BING"-33, Ralph lists the qualifications necessary for a young man interested in forming such a partnership....resident in the UK; keenly interested in Bing....a lot of us qualify in these respects, but it doesn't end there. The applicant must be able to compose and write articles about Bing, must possess a good knowledge on all aspects of Bing's career, and must be able to type (preferably direct onto stencils). How many applicants have now escaped elimination?

The reason for these few paragraphs is to dispel any thoughts which ICC members may have that yours truly is rushing to apply for the job. Nothing can be further from the truth, although it cannot be said that I don't possess the qualifications! Let me dispense with my usual modesty and present a few details which have hitherto been unknown, particularly to a large number of our new members....

Name JOHN D. BASSETT Age 25 Occupation 'Monotype' keyboard operator

Writing and editing experience

"T.V.R.G." resident columnist
 "SQUARE ONE" assistant editor
 "GUNN REPORT" resident columnist
 "BING" editor
 "THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY" joint compiler
 "THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAHY" joint compiler
 "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" joint compiler

Typing abilities

Typist of own "GUNN REPORT" articles
 Joint typist of "BING" (two-thirds of every issue)
 Sole typist of "THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY"
 "THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAHY"
 and "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY"

Interest and dedication

Has 'lived and breathed' Crosbyana since 1966. During that time has accumulated over 1,000 78's and LP's of Bing, together with personally autographed records, books and photographs. Has met Bing and exchanged regular correspondence and Christmas cards for the past 3 or 4 years.

Unfortunately for Ralph Harding, I have no intention of switching allegiances, despite the attractive financial gains, but nonetheless, I wish him every success in finding an assistant editor to help ease that weary load!

@@
 @ TAPE CROSBY @ by FRED REYNOLDS
 @@@

69 Heathmere Avenue,
 Yardley, Birmingham,
 B25 8RQ.

Not to be confused with the much-acclaimed "BING" Tape Service operated by Bob Roberts and detailed on page 23 of this issue, the "TAPE CROSBY" operates as an independent feature of this magazine. It consists of a frequently changing taped 'programme' of Crosbyana which circulates regularly amongst a limited number of ICC members.

Interested members are advised that there is a waiting list at the time of 'going to press' but when vacancies occur an announcement will be made in this magazine.

 CROSBY SHOPPE

FREE advertising for ICC members wishing to BUY,
 SELL or EXCHANGE items of Crosbyana.

FOR SALE: Back issues of "BING". The following numbers are for sale at 33 pence each post-paid: 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32. Additionally, the following back issues of 'Crosby Collector' are for sale, also at 33 pence each post-paid: 38, 43, 45, 49, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65. Full remittance to Jim Hayes, 161 Bowland Drive, Liverpool, L21 0JA.

WANTED: Many 10" UK Brunswick LP's are required, also the following 12" albums: LAT 8044, 8152, 8154, 8217, 8253, 8281, 8331, 8334, 8505, and 'BING'S HOLLYWOOD' nos. 1-5 and 13. Also many pre-1936 78rpm issues required. Please send details of disposals to Barry Freestone, 5 Glanville Road, Blenheim Gardens, Brixton, London, S.W.2. (New member)

OFFERS INVITED: for the following albums: 'CHRISTMAS STAR', mint copy; 'ALL-STAR FESTIVAL' (UNHCR-1), as new. Bert Bishop, "Tideway", Imperial Avenue, Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 6AJ.

WANTED: '101 GANG SONGS' Part 2, in best possible condition. Please write to Bert Bishop, address above.

FOR TRADE: A few copies of the rare 7" 'CHORD' disc, 'YOU'RE THE ONLY STAR BING', for trade only. What have you? Please write to Colin Pugh, 29 Picton Street, Montpelier, Bristol, BS6 5PZ.

WANTED: Back issues of "BING", from issue 1 to 30. Please write to Eric Crowder, 2 Appledore Avenue, Wollaton, Nottingham, NG8 2RE. (Eric will be willing to borrow and zerox copies if possible).

 * THE OFFICIAL ICC TAPE: A special collection of *
 * Bing's personal spoken messages to the International Crosby Circle, *
 * available on tape from the Editor. Price 90 pence (including postage *
 * and packing). Tape is recorded dual-track at 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ i.p.s. although *
 * cassettes can be supplied by special arrangement. Refer to page 14 *
 * of "BING"-32 for full details. *

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Several copies of the French 'DAYBREAK' issue, "NOELS AMERICAINS" (2C 062-92.972). Please write to Colin Pugh, address above.

ICC MEMBERS are invited to join the AMERICAN CLUB CROSBY (founded in 1937). Dues (\$2.50 a year) include subscription to "BING-GANG", the club magazine. For further details write to Miss Pat Sullivan (President), 2829 West Winconsin Avenue, Apt.310, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53208, USA.

 * AVAILABLE TO REGISTERED MEMBERS ONLY: *
 * CLUB TIES in navy blue and of the finest *
 * possible quality - worn by the *
 * Editor and hundreds of members *
 * at many public functions. ... £1.00 each *
 * CLUB CAR BADGES for either grille or bar *
 * fitting - please state your *
 * requirements. ... £2.75 each *
 * CLUB BLAZER BADGES with either blue or *
 * black background. ... £3.75 each *
 * Each item bears the special full-colour emblem of the ICC. Prices *
 * quoted above include postage and packing. Members are advised to *
 * allow eight weeks for delivery. Cash with order, please, to: *
 * RON BAXTER, 24 ROPERGATE, PONTEFRACT, YORKS. ENGLAND. (Tel: 2351) *

WANTED: Record disposal lists for 'CROSBY SHOPPE'. Write to the Editor.

THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD?.....

by the EDITOR

In a letter to your Editor dated 18 February, Bing wrote as follows:-

"Sometime I'm going to have to get somebody to really make a study in depth of all the material that's floating around in which I was involved, and see if I can procure it for my files".

It is worth noting the above comments, for in so many words Bing expresses a desire to have somebody produce the ultimate compilation of all facts and figures relating to every aspect of his life and career. Can you envisage the amount of work involved in such an undertaking? If we decided to be that "somebody" it would entail the full resources of the ICC working in conjunction with a worldwide team of knowledgeable collectors. In addition, at least two writers with journalistic experience would be required to magically transform the resulting conglomeration of data into a proper, readable biography.

All ICC discographical projects produced to date would be fully revised and up-dated, and combined within the two covers. Although it might well involve years of diligent research and hard work on the part of everyone involved in its production, such a book could materialise, but lack of time and money are two of the biggest problems which would initially have to be overcome. A publication of this scope and magnitude would undoubtedly be the greatest tribute to Bing that we (as collectors and enthusiasts) could ever wish to make.

The Editor will be pleased to publish any constructive comments that members of the ICC may care to make on this subject. Address your correspondence to "Bingville" in time for September publication.

Thinking of new curtains for the living room? If so, this newspaper item from the 'NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST' (11th May) will prove of great interest....

'CHRISTMAS' NET FOR BING

Bing Crosby has accepted a gift from a new Nottingham company which will enable him to see "White Christmas" every time he looks through the windows of his California home. Having named their new Autumn designs after Bing's best selling song (over 100,000,000 sales) PAUL LEVIN NETS LTD. of Dayeyne Street, Carlton Road, Nottingham, decided to give some 50 yards of their cornelly embroidered design to the world's most successful recording artist (over 362,000,000 discs) and the man who has made Irving Berlin's number an 'ever-green'. "We made the offer to Mr. Crosby's agent and are delighted to hear that he has accepted the gift", said Managing Director Mr. Paul Levin. Now arrangements will be made to have the net presented to him.

(Article appears by courtesy of Eric Crowder, Nottingham)

SPECIAL ICC SERVICE

EDWARD HALE wishes to announce that he has the facilities to play and tape-record large transcription records up to 24" in diameter. Any members wishing to take advantage of this service are invited to contact Edward at 48 Highbury Hill, London, N5 1AP. (S.A.E. appreciated)

THE GUNN REPORT Many hundreds of 78's and occasional LP's for sale in each issue, including JAZZ, DANCE BANDS, BRASS BANDS, VOCAL, PERSONALITY, LIGHT ORCHESTRAL, BING, etc. In addition there are articles and discographical information....all presented in an inimitable and light-hearted style. JOHN GUNN, 15 LYNTON ROAD, HADLEIGH, BENFLEET, ESSEX.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
 BING ON THE BOX
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

BERT BISHOP reviews the latest round-up of Television and Radio programmes featuring Bing.

Whilst there have been no Crosby films on London area television ("ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS" has been screened on Midlands TV) there has been a wonderful amount of activity on the radio. A great deal of this has been as a direct result of members' efforts in keeping Bing to the forefront. The Editor has written up Eric Crowder's fine effort up there on Radio Nottingham, but here we can feature Stan White's coup in respect of the BBC weekly programme, "THE ORGANIST ENTERTAINS"; Bob Roberts' and Eric Griffiths' Bing chat-show on Radio Medway and last, but by no means certainly not least, the irrepresible Leslie Gaylor who had at least three songs by Bing played on the radio on May 2nd - Bing's birthday.

There are also sundry sights and sounds of the Old Groaner to make mention of in passing, which have been sent in by members - for which many thanks.

On Tuesday, April 9th at 7.30 p.m., BBC Radio-2, Robin Richmond once again introduced his regular feature, "THE ORGANIST ENTERTAINS". This programme has been running for a long time now, and way back last year he had been featuring Buddy Cole from a tape that ICC member, Stan White, had supplied him with. Stan had met Buddy Cole when he was in the UK and being a very keen organ connoisseur is well involved in many aspects of that musically instrumental genus. Consequently, he is well acquainted with Robin Richmond.

It appears that many listeners wrote to Mr. Richmond requesting more of Buddy Cole, especially his work with Bing. He got in touch with Stan, who some time last November wrote to Bing for a taped message that would be suitable for Robin Richmond's programme. Before hearing further, Bing was struck down with his illness and Stan didn't hold out too much hope of a response. However, Bing hadn't forgotten, and during his convalescence made up a tape on a home recorder - you can hear young Harry in the background, and mentioned by name, on the unedited original - and he sent it to Stan who in turn passed it on to Robin Richmond. Richmond edited the tape very slightly so that it came over as an 'interview' in person. And here, by courtesy of and with thanks to Stan White, is a transcript of the relevant part of the programme.

ROBIN RICHMOND: And a big hello from your old organ-grinder friend, Robin Richmond. Well, I think tonight we have quite an unusual show for you.... we have a personal word from none other than Bing Crosby himself on the subject of famous organists he has worked with, and we shall hear him sing with Helen Crawford and Eddie Dunstetter at the organ, and also we shall hear music from the great Buddy Cole....

It was a great surprise and pleasure when recently I heard from Bing Crosby himself, no less, all the way from Hollywood. As you probably know, Bing has worked with many organists including, of course, Buddy Cole....

BING: Robin, I might tell you that Buddy Cole and I worked together for a number of years. In my opinion he was an authentic genius - a most accomplished pianist and organist - a brilliant arranger and conductor - I think he was the best I've ever known at plucking a group of musicians and putting an arrangement together right on the date. We played a lot of benefits; oh! a lot of concerts, Buddy and I; mostly impromptu, and Buddy could take a bunch of local men and in thirty minutes' rehearsal, lay out complete accompaniment - the whole thing for an hour's concert - never be a hitch. Just a born accompanist, this fella. He was way ahead of his time, I think, in recording techniques. He had a big studio out at his house and he had all the latest recording equipment there of course, an organ and full facilities for any kind of a recording you wished. I often think what a wonderful time he would have had with all this modern electronic equipment, had he lived. Of course a lot of it came in use after his demise. He was a great guy, personally, too, and sessions with Buddy were always liberally laced with gags and laughs. We generally had the same musicians when we recorded most of our albums - they all knew one another and they had a lot of kidding

going on, a lot of con, and great fun.

R.R.: Mmm....that's interesting - well, let's hear now Buddy Cole playing 'How Am I To Know' on the organ you've just mentioned, Bing.

(recording)

R.R.: Ah yes, that was beautiful - 'How Am I To Know', Buddy Cole. Well now, Bing, you've worked, of course, a lot in the old days with that famous man and wife organ duo, Jesse and Helen Crawford.

BING: Well the Crawfords - Jesse and Helen - used to play mighty twin organs at the old New York Paramount. I worked there for 29 weeks for one stretch, and they had part of the programme to themselves - both solo and in duets. They were a feature, really, of every presentation at the theatre and practically everything they did was widely acclaimed - they were most popular. I would think together with Eddie Dunstedter they were the three leaders in theatre organ music; I recorded with all three. 'Goldmine In The Sky' was a big hit with Dunstedter - he came out of Chicago. Fellow named Milton Charles was a big organist on the West Coast and he was a real artiste - a man of great taste and talent. I can't tell you where we recorded the songs, er, 'Little Lady Make Believe' and 'Mother Nature's Lullaby' with the Crawfords but I suppose it was up on one of the top floors of the New York Paramount Theatre where the Crawfords had a studio. It was always a great thrill to work with people of this quality - this character - they were great artistes and a wonderful experience for me. And I must say all the records did rather well. I like the organ anyhow - just a good organ well played, to me is marvellous music. I can recall one time I was in Granada, in Spain, and I attended a High Mass in the great Cathedral there with its giant organ supplemented with a 45-piece string section - I never heard a more beautiful sound.

R.R.: Mmm....well, this too I think is a beautiful sound. It is, in fact, Bing Crosby accompanied by Helen Crawford, singing 'Can't We Talk It Over?', recorded in the Paramount New York studio he mentioned in December, 1931.

(recording)

R.R.: Yes, that was Bing Crosby, of course, and Helen Crawford at the organ. Well now, earlier Bing mentioned the hit tune 'Little Lady Make Believe'. He said that he recorded this with Jesse Crawford on the organ but it was, in fact, Eddie Dunstedter. On an unspecified Wurlitzer it was recorded some forty years ago, so there's a little surface noise.

(recording)

R.R.: Oh, I think that was a sweet little song - it was Bing Crosby with Eddie Dunstedter on Wurlitzer organ. And I would like to thank the Old Groaner for talking to us, and also to 'organ-nut' Stanley White of Kettering for making this possible. And now, earlier you remember Bing saying how he'd heard the thrilling sound of organ and orchestra in the great Cathedral in Granada in Spain, so to end our programme here's organ and orchestra in lighter vein, and once again it's Buddy Cole on his massive studio organ with the Monte Kelly orchestra playing 'The Dance Of The Comedians'.

Members will have read in Reg's columns in the March issue of "BING" the fascinating story behind the Radio Medway broadcast as penned by one of the participants, Eric Griffiths. It must have been a great thrill for him and Bob Roberts - uniquely styled in the 'GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS' as having the greatest collection of Crosbyana in the world - to be able to go on the air and talk about their hobby with interviewer Brian Faulkner. Eric's article didn't run to a transcript, the story of the event was ebulliently self-sufficient; but for those who were not able to hear this broadcast or a subsequent recording it is duplicated herewith: and just to reiterate, the 'one-take' broadcast went out at 11 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 6th, and ran for twenty minutes.

FAULKNER: Last week on SUNDAY SPECIAL at this time we were examining some interesting facts revealed in the latest edition of the GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS, and among the items was the fact that Bing Crosby has sold more records than any other recording artiste in the world. Not only that, but the greatest collection of Crosbyana is owned by Mr. Bob Roberts of Chatham - and tonight Bob, and his 'partner in crime', Eric Griffiths, have joined me in the studio, not only to play some Crosby recordings but also to talk about the man.

Bob, when did your interest start?

BOB: Well, Brian, during the thirties I used to mess about with short-wave radio and I picked up various American stations and heard Bing several times, and I really fell in love with his voice - I thought he'd got something the other singers hadn't got, and, to me, Bing has been my greatest singer; I've never heard anyone anywhere that can sing anything like him, and I followed his career right from that day right up to now: never tired; I've always enjoyed hearing his voice and playing his records.

FAULKNER: Eric, when did you first meet Bob?

ERIC: Well, I first met Bob about 1952, as far as I can remember, and this was at a Bing meeting in London, and we got together in a corner and decided that we would interchange all the material we had on Bing and so enlarge our individual collections; and we've met pretty frequently ever since.

FAULKNER: What was the first recording you obtained, Bob?

BOB: Ooh, that's going back a long time, Brian. Umm, "Just One More Chance", which was backed with "We're You Sincere". That was the first record I ever bought, and that's going back a long way! One of my favourites is "Many Happy Returns Of The Day". To me, that is one of Bing's greatest songs. I won't say the greatest, but one of them, and it illustrates Bing's range, and if you do play that, Brian, I'd like you to make a note of the last note. It's really terrific!

FAULKNER: Well, we're going to play that one now, aren't we?

BOB: Oh, that's great, Brian.

FAULKNER: Let's hear the first record now, shall we - from Bing Crosby.

(recording)

FAULKNER: Yes, Bing Crosby and "Many Happy Returns Of The Day", and if I may notice, Bob, that was recorded 42 years ago.

BOB: That's correct, Brian, 42 years ago.

FAULKNER: Fantastic!

BOB: A wonderful record, Brian.

FAULKNER: What is your favourite recording out of all the many that you have?

BOB: Well, I think, ah, "I've Got To Pass Your House", but I couldn't bring that along because it's a 78 and I don't think it reproduces too good, Brian. But this "Many Happy Returns Of The Day" I think I can say is my second favourite. It's a terrific record.

FAULKNER: How many records do you have?

BOB: Well, 2,000 now, Brian, and that's slightly increased on the figure in the GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS. This is updated only today, and the 2,000 figure includes 78's, LP's, EP's, singles, 'V' discs and 16" transcriptions, and on top of that, Brian, I've got about 1,500 hours of taped material which is un-issued material, radio shows, TV shows, interviews, and various things like that.

FAULKNER: Fantastic! How do you keep track of such a huge collection?

BOB: Ha, ha, ha - that's quite a problem! I've got a card index system - I don't think Eric will agree with that. He'll probably call it a card index abortion! We try and keep it up to date and I've got a chronological listing and alphabetical listing and various discographical books which we can make a note of the records we've got and the various labels and things like that. It's pretty complicated but it works fairly well.

FAULKNER: Let's play the next record, shall we? What's it going to be?

ERIC: Well, I think we should hear Bing singing with one of the many artistes he's recorded with over the years - Connee Boswell, with the Bob Crosby Orchestra, incidentally - "Tea For Two".

(recording)

FAULKNER: "Tea For Two" with the Bob Crosby Orchestra and Connee Boswell, and once again I notice that this one goes back to 1940, Bob.

BOB: That's right, Brian, 1940.

FAULKNER: One of your favourites, I've no doubt. You're obviously such a fan of Bing Crosby, have you ever met him?

BOB: I've met him several times, Brian; I once saw him at the Shepperton Studio for three sessions of three hours each when he was filming with Bob Hope on the ROAD TO HONG KONG - and that was a marvellous experience, something I shall never forget, and I've met him since at various hotels when he's been over here, and his brother, Larry, drops me a note saying when he's coming sometimes, and I'm very fortunate to have met him and been photographed with him. It's a terrific experience meeting the man, he's just as you would expect him - casual and so unassuming, he's no idea at all of his own importance. If you mention records that he's made: "Well I was lucky to have good orchestras, good composers...." - he won't take credit for anything himself and he's a fantastic character - terrific!

FAULKNER: What's your prized possession, would you say?

BOB: Ah, well, that's a tough one, Brian, that is. Umm, I've got a photograph which was taken with Bing - I prize that. I have many personal letters from Bing which I prize.

FAULKNER: Oh, yes, talking about that, he writes to you very often, doesn't he?

BOB: Yes, I get several letters a year from him, and I get a Christmas card each year, and I've just had a very nice letter from him dated 17th December when he was quite concerned about the state of the country over here, and hopes that we're not suffering too much, and he mentions they've got similar troubles over there, and his actual words were: "We're determined to lick 'em", so if they can lick their problems, we can lick ours, Brian.

FAULKNER: Is it true that he often sends to you for recordings?

BOB: Aahh, well, I won't say often, Brian, he has sent to me for various recordings. I once supplied him with a very old Paramount newsreel clipping which he'd forgotten all about and he was very, very interested in it, and quite recently he's shown a great deal of interest in his old recordings, especially the radio shows and studio rejects, and I have, in fact, sent him several tapes - eight or nine tapes quite recently - of some of this very, very rare material and he was quite pleased to get it.

FAULKNER: What kind of songs has he sung over the years?

BOB: Well, he's sung everything, Brian, er, Hawaiian stuff, cowboy stuff, he's sung French and Spanish, he's done religious stuff, Dixieland stuff, he's narrated - come on, Eric, what else?

ERIC: Irish songs, of course. In fact, he's probably covered the whole world. There are the two albums, of course, about 'Around the world' with Rosemary Clooney.

FAULKNER: Let's come on to the next piece of music; what's it going to be?

ERIC: Well, I think we should illustrate Bing singing in different languages by playing "La Vie En Rose" with Paul Durand's Orchestra, which brings us up to 1953.

(recording)

FAULKNER: "La Vie En Rose" with the Paul Durand Orchestra, and as Eric said, it goes back to 1953. Which song has Bing sung most of all, Bob?

BOB: Well, "....Blue Of The Night", without any doubt, Brian. Not only has he recorded it several times but also he opened every radio show he did with it and that runs right through the old Cremo Shows, Woodbury Shows, the Kraft Shows, the Chesterfield Shows, the G.E.C Shows - the whole lot! And he always opened with "....Blue of the Night", and on one occasion, as a point of interest, he opened with "When

the blue of the night meets the green of the day", and that was done especially for St. Patrick's Day. I've got that recording at home - unfortunately, it's on tape - I couldn't bring it along - but that is the song he's sung most of all.

ERIC: Of course, there were many amusing openings to that signature tune, weren't there, Bob?

BOB: Yes, yes; he fluffed it once or twice, didn't he? Then sometimes he said, "I missed the light". On one occasion he said the orchestra was a bit late, "Come on, come on, wake up!" and made them start again. But I think, Brian, you know, one of these days - when I retire, if I ever do retire! - I'm going to go through all these old "...Blue Of The Nights" - there must be, well there must be a thousand different versions, and compare them because every one was done 'live' - and some of them were done twice a night, weren't they, Eric? And every one of those versions was slightly different. And you can imagine the amount of research there is to do on Crosby and his recordings. You can never lose interest, Brian.

FAULKNER: Let's have a few facts now - for people who didn't tune in last week and hear us talking about the GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS. How many records has he sold to date?

BOB: Well, officially, Brian, three hundred million, six hundred and fifty thousand. Now that figure was quoted in 1970. The latest figure, although it's not confirmed, I bet anything you like it's correct, is approximately four hundred million records now, on a hundred and fifty-five different labels - I checked that especially this morning because there's a lot of 'pirate' labels coming through now and at one time the figure was a hundred and thirty-three labels - now it's one hundred and fifty-five which is bang up-to-date - and in twenty-four different countries, Brian. Now I've got records on a hundred and fifty of these hundred and fifty-five records in my collection, and I've got them from twenty-three of the twenty-four countries. One I've got is a record from Russia. I've got one from Poland which is quite rare, but I understand there were never any official pressings of Bing's records in Russia - but there are some 'pirate' pressings, and I've been after one of those. If any listeners have got one, or contacts in Russia, well, ha! - just send it along!

ERIC: Don't forget the sheet music.

BOB: And sheet music as well, yes. And on top of that figure of four hundred million, or if you want to take the official figure, three hundred million - I still maintain it's four hundred million - Bing has also recorded approximately 1,650 songs, commercially, and about another 2,000 - probably more - for radio and TV. So there you have it, Brian.

FAULKNER: (laughing) I don't know what to say, Bob - honestly, you must be the fan of all fans, I would have thought. Let's ask another question, shall we? What about other interests in life - do you have any?

BOB: Other interests? Well, the thing that comes immediately to mind is women, but we won't say that! Jolson. I've got a pretty good collection of Jolson, Brian, which really I started because Bing once said that Jolson influenced him - I don't think so - Bing should know more about this than I do, but I've never really seen it. Jolson was so unlike Bing because Jolson pandered to the public and he was there to put on a show. Whereas Bing was so casual - he never sought publicity or fame as Jolson did. Jolson said he'd got a good voice - he knew he'd got a good voice. Bing has always said he can't sing - he says he's just one of the boys and he just happens to sing the right song at the right time. I'm interested in Bix Beiderbecke - I've got a fairly good collection of Bix Beiderbecke, the famous trumpeter from the Whiteman days, and the rest of the time is spent mainly with the small business which I run. But if I can just mention one thing, Brian, I know we haven't got a lot of time but I would like to say that my wife has helped me no end with my interest in Crosby. She's been very, very patient throughout the years and she's put up with a lot, believe you me!

ERIC: Of course, Bob, she is a great enthusiast herself.

BOB: Yes, yes; and, er, have I got time for a little story, Brian? - well, when I first met her during the war years and I asked her up to see my Crosby collection and she thought it was a new angle on 'come up and see my etchings', and nobody was more surprised than Vera when she found I'd got some Crosby records, I can tell you that!

FAULKNER: Eric, let's come over to you now. Have you any other interests?

ERIC: I have quite a few actually. I'm interested in British dance bands of the thirties, which was my original interest, really. And being more up-to-date I have, as far as I know, a complete collection of James Last's Orchestra which is a very popular band all over the world now.

FAULKNER: Indeed, yes, but your first love is definately Crosby?

ERIC: Oh, yes. Definately.

FAULKNER: Bob - Eric - thank you very much for coming along this evening. It's time now to play the last record in this cameo of Bing Crosby - what's it going to be?

BOB: Let's have one of my favourites: "I Left My Heart In San Francisco". This is a terrific recording which has never been issued commercially and as far as I know, has never been played on the air in this country.

(recording)

FAULKNER: "I Left My Heart In San Francisco" from Bing Crosby - and my thanks to Bob Roberts and Eric Griffiths for joining me this evening in the studio.

Max Bygraves, that relaxed, singing comedian, very much on the record scene with his 'singalong' albums right now has been entertaining us of late with some good clean shows. One of them, recently, was based on his capabilities as an impressionist, and he included his own interpretation of Bing singing among the more easily conveyed performers who rely on gimmicky clothes or bodily gyrations to get themselves accepted by a rather gullible public. Bing is still for all generations.

Possibly many members wrote to the BBC for a request record on the occasion of Bing's birthday; but none, surely, with more remarkable zeal and success than Leslie Gaylor. He sent out his news of and requests for Bing's 73rd birthday on the backs of seven copies of the photograph that he has of himself with Bing (reproduced recently in this magazine) - one to each of the radio record programmes - mentioning that the requests were for all members of the ICC.

At 10.50 a.m. Pete Murray read out Leslie's message and went on to play "Swinging On A Star" during his OPEN HOUSE programme, and later, at 12.30 p.m. Jimmy Young played Leslie's request, "Little Ol' Tune" and, of course, read the dedication to the ICC, mentioning at the same time Bing's birthday and age. As a result of this request and the information conveyed, the BBC were inundated with 'phone calls regarding Bing's age, etc. So much so that Brian Willey, producer of the show, had to break into it to introduce Charles Thompson (who was responsible for the 'Life And Times Of Bing Crosby' 14-part programme) in order that he could verify the fact that Bing's given age of 73 was correct. Leslie did not set out to make an issue of Bing's age - he just mentioned it 'en passant'. Everyone who heard the announcements have said that they were terrific 'plugs' for the ICC.

Prior to all this excitement another of Leslie's requests paid off when Simon Bates of the EARLY SHOW featured "San Antonio Rose", and on May 4th another Bing and Satchmo duet was played, and Bing's birthday and the ICC mentioned, by Charlie Chester in his programme. Chester is quite a Bing fan himself so Leslie was on a sure thing there, but on 2nd May all the seven shows that Leslie sent photograph written requests to played a Bing record!

Also on Bing's birthday Leslie, along with members Vera Lucas, Irene Orr, Phil Clarke, Eric Crowder, Alf Mutter and Bob Roberts and others, had "Stranger

In Paradise" played for them on Radio Solent. A few days previous to this event, Leslie and Phil Clarke took part in a 50 minute programme about Bing - again on Radio Solent. As a result of this broadcast the Station 'phoned Leslie for the address of the ICC, and on 5th May Reg Bristo's address was read out in full on the programme, MORNING CALL.

Congratulations are due to Leslie and all the other South of England members who achieved such widespread as well as local publicity for the ICC and for their continued success in keeping Bing ever present on the popular record scene.

During the EARLY SHOW of the week 6-10th May; those members who are up before 7.00 a.m. with their radios playing, will doubtless have heard five tracks from the new album, "THE BEST OF BING". One each morning, with the LP being mentioned as 'Album of the Week' on Radio-2. This should create a little action in the record shops and if the sales go well could result in more Bing releases from EMI (Leslie Gaylor has written to them suggesting a number of suitable albums for their consideration!).

There was a brief reference to Bing's influence on the change from silent pictures to 'talkies' in a Radio-4 programme that went out at 4.05 p.m. on the 8th May - the programme being entitled OK FOR SOUND. Most of the interesting documentary was centred around Al Jolson, John Gilbert, Gloria Swanson and Bessie Love, all of whom found fame - with Bing - in this advancement of the media.

Finally for this quarter, on FILM NIGHT for the 17th April a clip from one of Bing's films was shown by Philip Jenkinson in a TV broadcast that had as its theme how the movies treated popular music during the vintage years. This information was acquired rather vaguely so the title of the film and song are not known; so far a letter to Barry Brown, the producer, has yet to realise an answer.

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 @ NEW ALBUM EXPECTED FROM BING! @
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Exciting news via Leslie Gaylor....

Members will read elsewhere in this issue that Bing is considering a new LP featuring Jolson-type Southern songs with an up-tempo accompaniment. If such an album materialises it will be Bing's first recording for 1974 since he was hospitalised earlier this year. Full information will be published in a future edition of "BING". In the meantime, refer to Bing's letter dated May 17th.

(advertisement)

21 Jan.	Snuggled on your shoulder	B 11163-A
11 Feb.	St. Louis blues	BX 11263-A
11 Feb.	St. Louis blues	BX 11263-B
16 Feb.	Starlight	B 11291-A
16 Feb.	How long will it last?	B 11292-A
23 Feb.	Love, you funny thing!	B 11330-A
23 Feb.	My woman	B 11331-A
29 Feb.	Shine	B 11376-A
8 Mar.	Soft lights and sweet music) From "Face The	BX 11416-B
8 Mar.	Soft lights and sweet music) Music Medley"	BX 11416-C

....IF YOU NEED INFORMATION LIKE THIS, THEN
 YOU'LL FIND "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY"
 WILL BE ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE REFERENCE
 BOOKS IN YOUR COLLECTION - only 45p post-paid.

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 CROSBYOGRAPHY
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Discographical Research.

BOB SUPPLIES DATES

In answer to the query in "BING"-33, our publicity officer BOB ROBERTS informs us that "Deep in a dream of you" comes from Bing's 'KRAFT MUSIC HALL' of 2nd February 1939, and not from a Sennett 'short' as generally believed. Bob also reports that the 'GOLDILOCKS' tracks were video-taped in 1969 and televised in 1970, therefore Bing never has had a 'blank' recording year. (Refer to Bert Bishop's comments on page 30 of "BING"-33)

DID BING SING "LINDA" ?

Edward Hale (London) wrote to the surgeon at Burlingham asking if a recording of Bing's song to the nurses was available in any form, and what the title of the song was. The reply from Bing, printed below, answers his enquiry. Bing didn't record "Linda" commercially as we know, but it's worth checking if this ever appeared on one of the 'KRAFT' shows.

April 23, 1974

Dear Mr. Hale:

Dr. Hanfling turned over your letter to me inquiring about a song that I was supposed to have sung when I was hospitalized not too long ago.

I don't recall anything particularly, except there was a girl named Linda who was my nurse for quite awhile, and I think I sang snatches of an old song to her called, "Linda".

No recording is available, of course, and no tape - although I think I did record that song years ago when it was popular, but I wouldn't bet on it.

Sorry I can't be of more substantial help to you -

Best wishes,
 (signed) Bing
 Bing Crosby

 * For full information regarding Bing's prolific recording career, you *
 * cannot afford to be without the revised "BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" *
 * available now from Reg Bristo. (see page 3) *
 * *****

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 THE "BING" TAPE SERVICE
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by BOB ROBERTS

Operating in conjunction with the ICC, the "BING" Tape Service provides members with the unique opportunity of acquiring high quality tapes of virtually anything ever sung or spoken by Bing Crosby, whether it be from radio, television, films, records, etc. Strict legal copyright clauses appertain to private tape recording for obvious reasons, but these facilities are available via the ICC without offence to anyone. Material available includes Woodbury Soap Radio Shows, Kraft, Philco and Chesterfield Radio Shows, General Electric Shows, Hollywood Palace Shows, Crosby Family Shows, Red Cross Shows, AFRS programmes, Cancer Crusades, Command Performances, All Star Reviews, G.I. Journals and many more. All tape is fully guaranteed and recorded dual-track at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ or 15 i.p.s. to suit the facilities of members. Delivery is usually within one week of receipt of payment. For further information about material available, please send a stamped self-addressed envelope to:
 BOB ROBERTS (ICC Publicity Officer), 56 THOROLD ROAD, CHATHAM, KENT, ENGLAND.

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 @ JUST SONGS OF SUNBEAMS? @
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by KEN CROSSLAND

Some time ago, Ken Barnes, in his book "SINATRA AND THE GREAT SONG STYLISTS", delivered a very creditable critique of Bing the popular singer. Although some of his comments were unfavourable, they were on the whole, fair. One however, included "He pays little attention to the emotional content of lyrics". Like any self-respecting Crosbyite, my immediate reaction was one of all-out hostility. On reflection however, I find this comment acceptable - until a few weeks ago. Then, as I was listening to Bing's "South Of The Border", it came to me that I was deceiving myself. Bing does pay attention to the emotional content of lyrics, and his interpretation is frequently highly original. Of course, one must first attempt to discover what Mr. Barnes really meant. Did he mean that Bing doesn't plunge himself to the depths of depression as evidenced in Sinatra's "Cycles" album of a few years ago? If so, then I do contend the case in the slightest. It's hard to imagine Bing even looking miserable, let alone sounding it. But surely, the emotional content of lyrics covers fields wider than this. Equally, it goes further than the efforts of some of today's 'contemporary' singer/composers, who concentrate on the lyrics at the expense of the melody, a la Joni Mitchell, the composer of many fine songs, including "Both Sides Now", but not to my mind a fine singer. No - song interpretation goes much further than this.

Before continuing, let me exonerate myself from the charge of being too light on Bing. There are songs which would not suit Bing. Some of the contemporary Perry Como material for example would not suit Bing. Having heard Bing sing "Bridge Over Troubled Water" on television, I openly concede that Bing does not do justice to the beautiful words. Equally, Bing has been criticised for his treatment of "Little Green Apples" and "Sunrise, Sunset" on the "BING 'N BASIE" album. Going further back to Bing's 'heyday', the sheer power and perfection of Bing's voice often overshadowed the lyrics (hardly a fault!).

Nevertheless, I would argue that Bing has given us many examples of lyric interpretation, adequate to render Mr. Barnes' comment unfair. Let us turn firstly, to love songs, the type perhaps most closely identified with the Maestro. Will anyone **dispute** that Bing's rendering of "Gypsy Love Song" does not do justice to the lyrics? Similarly, "Aloha Oe" or "Mexicali Rose". Surely one of Bing's finest recordings is "But Beautiful", which says everything that Johnny Burke intended. Finally, there is "True Love". How a singer can become so closely identified with such songs without paying any attention to the lyrics is beyond me!

Moreover, many of the songs with which Bing has been associated have been novelty songs, with subtle lyrics. Yet for someone who pays little attention to lyrics, Bing captures all the humour of "I'm An Old Cowhand". Added to this example, there is Bing's interpretation of the marvellous Cole Porter lyric in "You're The Tops".

Digressing slightly from the subject of emotional lyrics, in considering the wider area of song interpretation, one can find many examples where Bing's interpretation has added to the lyrics, giving them an atmosphere which cannot be set down on paper. I'm thinking particularly of the songs in which Bing has adopted an accent. Take for example, "My Friend The Doctor". The slight touch of brogue in Bing's delivery gives the song added humour. Bing's western songs also reflect this. "Buckskin Joe" is a recording on which Bing truly captures the western atmosphere. And still on the subject of western songs, how many people who have heard Bing's chilly "Hang Me, Oh Hang Me" would accuse him of not paying attention to the emotional content of those lyrics!

Coming more up-to-date, there are numerous examples of originality and depth of feeling in Bing's recordings. Indeed, it was the Longines version of "South Of The Border" which moved me to write this. Bing's interpretation of this song gives a meaning to the lyrics which I have heard no other singer even realise, let alone develop. The "HEY JUDE/HEY BING!" album contains three examples of Bing getting full meaning from the words; his version of "Little Green Apples" is unsurpassed; "Just For Tonight" - a song which would

have made a perfect 'single' - and finally, "All In The Game". "Love Is Blue", also from 1968, is another example. Moreover, in recent years Bing has tackled many songs traditionally associated with other singers, and yet has still approached them in an entirely different way. Take for example "Memories Are Made Of This", a song recorded by numerous singers, yet none of them bringing out the lyrics as Bing does. Equally, "Those Were The Days" is a fresh interpretation. Finally, coming right up to date, Bing's "Tie A Yellow Ribbon", a song recorded by just about everybody, and yet all - Perry Como, Dean Martin, the lot - basically copying Dawn's original arrangement. Yet with Bing, we find the song approached in a completely new way; slower, with a different type of backing.

All singers have their own songs, with which anyone else's interpretations are inevitably compared. Bing has hundreds of songs with which his name is forever linked, purely for the way in which he treats the lyrics. Similarly, whenever Bing 'borrows' a song, he never copies.

Always original, and always with the words in mind, Bing's records are not 'just songs of sunbeams'!

(Full information on the albums mentioned in Ken's article can be found in "THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAHY" - see page 4 of this issue)

S T O P P R E S S

COLIN PUGH informs us at the time of 'going to press' that EMI have just released an MCA 'single'....

MCA 111 "White Christmas"/"God rest ye Merry, Gentlemen"

The usual pressings have been used - refer to the ICC's discography for further details.

Please remember the 'copy' deadline ... all letters and articles for publication in the September issue of "BING" should reach "Bingville" no later than the last week of August. Members' co-operation in this important matter will be greatly appreciated. Please make all subscriptions payable to the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE and forward to the Secretary, Reg Bristo - not to the Editor!

R.S.V.P. means "record sales various prices" (apart from a hundred and one other things), so anyone interested in purchasing vintage 78's would do well to send a S.A.E. to PETER SEAGO for further information. The address is 5 Tollet Street, Stepney Green, London, E.1.
(Please mention "BING" magazine when writing!)

Another magazine which we just can't ignore ('cos it's editor is the ICC's secretary!) is "GOLDEN YEARS" - considered by many (including Royalty) to be the finest thing that's ever hit the stalls. Each issue contains extensive write-ups and discographies of some of the greatest names in show-business. Every aspect of the 'golden era' is covered and the magazine is published quarterly. Write to Reg Bristo for further **information** - or send 25p for a sample copy!

A reminder to our newer members that all advertising in "BING" is absolutely free, but please bear in mind that we do not accept extensive auction lists which cover more than half-a-page in depth. You would do better to submit a 'set price' sales list (these are by far the more popular), and please remember that full information (record numbers, labels, conditions, etc.) must accompany every list. Record titles are equally important, for a large number of our younger members are without the relevant information which a lot of 'older' or more experienced collectors take for granted. SOON, WE HOPE TO PUBLISH A SUPPLEMENT CONSISTING OF A NUMBERS/TITLES LISTING OF ALL BING'S ENGLISH 78 rpm ISSUES.

DO I HEAR YOU SAYING?

The Editor's Postbag....

BOB ROBERTS (Kent) writes: I had a four-day trip to Germany over Easter and found some interesting Bing LP's, cartridge and cassette tapes. Nothing new but interesting from a label collector's point of view. In a letter from Bing recently, he tells me that he's feeling pretty good....fishing, swimming and playing tennis!

RON DANIELS (Australia) writes: I received the Christmas issue of "BING" only a short while ago....they must have gone back to using sail boats for Royal Mail! Many thanks for a well-written and well-presented magazine which has become the Premier Crosby magazine. May it stay that way for a long time.

ERIC CROWDER (Nottingham) writes: I was intrigued by your article in "BING"-32 entitled 'SO YOU THINK YOU CAN SING LIKE BING', and I'm looking forward to hearing Richard Lillico's tape, for like most Bing enthusiasts I like to try and impersonate the great man, and most folk say I'm reasonably successful. Still, I'd better listen to the standard of Richard rather than make a fool of myself! Also, I was very interested in the mention of a visit to the States to see Bing, for like John Finan and probably many other members, I've always had a life's ambition to meet Bing in person, and I'd like to have my name added to the list which Ralph Gibbons of Hants is compiling.

EDDIE ALLAN (Edinburgh) writes: I thought I'd write and tell you that I took Reg Bristo's advice and wrote to 'WORLD RECORDS' to try and obtain a copy of "THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS" LP, but I haven't received a reply. I waited for five weeks then wrote again, but still no word. On each occasion I enclosed a S.A.E. (I wonder if they steam off the stamps?) Needless to say, I'm still without a copy of this disc, but it may turn up some day. Thank you for your fine efforts on a wonderful and interesting magazine.

(EDITOR's comments: If anyone can help Eddie with his requirements, write to him at 16 Kirk Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5EY.)

BARRY FREESTONE (London) writes: Thank you for a great magazine and a really nice welcome to new members. I see on page 55 of "BING"-33 that Reg Bristo refers to the ICC's very young Crosbyites, well it might interest you to know that I am only 17 and have been a Bing collector for two years.

(EDITOR's comments: In his letter, Barry goes on to raise one or two queries concerning Bing's LP issues. Most of the information he requires will be found within the LP-ography, recommended to all members (young and old) and advertised on page 4 of this issue)

LESLIE GAYLOR (Isle of Wight) writes: My grateful thanks to all concerned for the last issue of the magazine - very enjoyable reading. I had a really happy time on April 27th in conjunction with Phil Clarke of Portsmouth. We both took part in a BBC Radio Solent programme called 'MORNING CALL', which interested the listeners very much it seems. Our new member Eric Crowder of Nottingham has really got the Bing 'bug' I note! He gave Bing a great 'plug' on his local radio station on May 2nd. Charlie Chester sent me some of his mail about Bing, one of them being a letter from a teenage physically handicapped girl living in Poole, Dorset. Her favourite singers are Donny Osmond and Bing Crosby, so I've sent the young lady a couple of Bing photographs. You may be interested in the following letter I received from the BBC recently:

13th May 1974

Dear Mr. Gaylor,

Thank you for your recent request. I am sure that meeting Bing was a very proud moment for you and we would be grateful if we were able to keep the photograph you sent us to pin on our office wall. It is very fine and, I am sure, a collector's item.

Yours sincerely,
Carol Anderson
Secretary to Barbara Page,
Producer: 'EARLY SHOW'.

NORMAN TOOGOOD (Southampton) writes: I note that the last issue of "BING" refers to Southampton as a 'hotbed' of Crosbyana. Three of us Southampton members, Gordon Marshfield, Reg Hampton and myself are in constant touch with each other on 'things Bing'. In common with most other members I sent letters and a 'get well' card to Bing, and have in fact written to him again recently. I received a wonderful full-plate photograph from him, prior to his illness, nicely autographed "To my friend, Norman, from Bing". My sitting room boasts so many framed photographs of Bing, together with letters, etc., that my friends refer to it as "The Crosby Museum"!

JEAN-PAUL FREREAULT (Canada) writes: I very much enjoyed the ICC's LP-ography except for one thing. You have listed all the countries that have sold Bing's records in the world with the exception of Canada. The issuing of records in Canada is the same as in the USA, England or any other country you may care to mention. Canada manufactures and sells its own records, and the catalogue numbers are entirely different from those available in America. Don't think that I'm mad, but Canada is not to be ignored in this respect.

(EDITOR's comments: The omission of Canadian issues was by no means intentional and we are sorry that Jean-Paul has felt 'put out' over this matter. It so happens that no information was forthcoming at the time of compiling the LP-ography. It must be stressed that the 'Country Abbreviations' listing was not intended to be a listing of every country in the world issuing Bing's records. If so, the list would surely have been twice as long. The countries named were those dealt with in the LP-ography - no more, no less. It has recently been brought to our attention that the 'TOTEM' albums reviewed in "BING"-32 and 33 are of Canadian origin, and not of American origin as reported.)

BOB MACHLISS (Victoria, Australia) writes: With the demise of the 'Crosby Collector' I find that I'm pretty much cut-off from the Bing world, and the reason for this letter is to apply for a subscription to "BING". You may like a few details about myself. I'm 30 years old and I've liked Bing since I was about 4, having been a serious collector for the last 10 years. I have a pretty fair collection - all but about 200 sides on the original 78's and these mostly from the later years. I like everything that Bing puts down on record, but like a good many other collectors my favourite period is 1926 to 1936 when I think Bing's voice had a unique quality that is not so evident in his later work. I'm pretty much a lone wolf when it comes to collecting, although I do have a lot of contact down here with Adrian Fowler and Gordon Wall. Gordon, as you know, does incredible things with old movie soundtracks.

JACK DOUGAN (Co. Down) writes: An article in the 'REVEILLE' dated March 22nd was headed 'Frank's Answered By The Best People', and concerned Frank Ogden of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, whose hobby is writing to famous people from all walks of life - people like President Nixon, Archbishop Makarios, General Franco and Bing Crosby! Bing very kindly replied to Frank as follows: "Letters like yours make me increasingly grateful for all the good fortune that has been bestowed on me". Many thanks, John, for a most informative March issue of the magazine. Please convey my best wishes to all our members.

EDWARD HALE (London) writes: In my opinion, Richard Lillico did a jolly fine job of singing like Bing, and I've now filed his tape along with the remainder of my Bing tapes. I would like him to know that I often have a go at this myself, and I would very much like to send Richard a tape if you would care to print his address in the magazine. Keep up the good work!

(EDITOR's comment: Write to our 1973 competition winner, Richard Lillico, at 4, Agricola Road, Wingrove, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 4. If any of our new members would like to hear Richard's winning entry, send 30p to the Editor for the ICC's tape issue, 'DICK SINGS BING'. Refer to "BING"-32 for full details.)

OLIVE GREGORY (Wirral) writes: Don't you think it's wonderful Bing getting better? What would we do without him? The world would be a much poorer place, that's for sure. Without the shadow of a doubt, the last issue of "BING" was the best I've ever read, and it's all due to that "Road to Recovery". What a delightful road to walk along. How I wish I had thought to say, like Peter Diffley - "You can't have too much of a good Bing"!


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 BISHOP'S BENCH  
 ~~~~~

...sit a spell - more from BERT BISHOP

A discographical problem relating to whether or not Bing had a vacant year insofar as commercially released recordings were concerned has been finally resolved. Members may recall that Bing, in a letter to me published in these columns in the last issue of the magazine was unsure about 1969 - although the LP "HEY JUDE/HEY BING!" was released in that year. However, the album was cut in 1968, so it didn't count. Now, Bob Roberts has furnished the information that the animated TV cartoon film, "GOLDILOCKS", to which Bing and his present family (Harry excluded) contributed the songs and dialogue, was video-taped during the year 1969. Although the LP of the soundtrack was not released until 1970, as stated on the sleeve, the actual recording dates are what matter here, and in this respect Bing has still a 'continuous performance' going from when he cut his first record in 1926. Which in itself must be a record among many others.

This year may not prove blank either for I have been sent a cutting from the WEST PALM BEACH TIMES which reads:

LAS CRUCES, Mexico (AP)

- Bing Crosby, who is recovering from surgery and will be 70* on May 2, says he will be back at work soon.

Crosby said he will begin taping in a few weeks for a TV special with Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey and Mitzi Gaynor, and will do several conservation programs later. He is recovering from a Jan. 13 operation for removal of a nonmalignant lung growth.

He and his family are vacationing in this Baja California resort.

This short article is headlined 'BING CROSBY PLANS RETURN'...one feels that despite the seriousness of his illness he was hardly absent!

In a letter to me last month, Ken Crossland again raised the matter of the word 'klutz' - "the scourge of Crosby fans ever since Fred Astaire applied it to Bing...." as he aptly wrote. Ken included a paragraph that originated from one of our American members, Mike Ferruzza, which explains this word in such a delightful manner that both Ken and I thought it worthy of inclusion within the pages of this magazine. Here, then, is Mike's description of a klutz:-

"An amiable clod - an amiable oaf? An inoffensive sort of happy-go-lucky guy who can't seem to do the right thing at the right time - but who isn't wrong either. Like Costello of Abbott and Costello. A klutz would be a guy who'd toss a coin in the air and not have it come down! Or a guy who'd be holding a fork if someone were passing the soup! Who has a hole in his pocket where the coins should be. A guy who has a brown sock on his left foot and a blue one on his right....or who'd wind up wearing a 'tux' and sneakers!"

Having progressed from the German KLOTZ: a great lout; to my Florida friend's description "someone a bit slow on the uptake" through Bing's own interpretation: "lackadaisical, inept, maladroit", I think we all now have a pretty clear idea of what Fred Astaire meant of Bing's dancing ability - or do we? It seems to be fairly adaptable!

Editor, John, sent me word that a female character referred to herself as a 'klutz' when revealing her poor dancing abilities, in a recent COLUMBO programme which stars Peter Falk. Falk, with Bing, is one of the fringe members of the 'Clan' (Sinatra, Martin, Sammy Davis, etc.) and one wonders

whether they were all 'possibles' for the COLUMBO role which Bing, as first choice spurned. Peter Falk was the seventh actor in line for this role (see page 45 of "BING"-33). One can only speculate how Bing might have played it.

Peter Diffley has very kindly written to me acquainting me with the news that "A splendid book has been published this month (May). The title is 'EDDIE CONDON'S SCRAPBOOK OF JAZZ', published by Robert Hale at £4.80". Peter informs us that this book contains some half dozen photographs of Bing all from the private collection of jazzman Condon (whose recent demise was noted in these pages). Bing was - in fact is - godfather to one of Eddie Condon's children. Two full-page shots show Bing with Bud Freeman and the other with his godson. Apart from the Bing content there is much here for the jazz fan, it being full of many interesting snaps from the early jazz era. The book is an American publication but is obviously in our bookshops in the UK.

Peter goes on in further informative manner to relate that a new biography of George Gershwin contains a reference to a recording Bing made with Gershwin at the piano. This record, apparantly has been lost - never issued - and no trace remains of it. It was cut in the days when both were virtually unknown. Well, now; there's one for BOB ROBERTS and the discographical team. Can anyone throw any light on that piece of information?

In a letter from David Dimbleby the answer to the nagging I.Q. question which was presented in his 'TALK-IN' programme and offered here as a Christmas quiz (not accurately I regret) has finally let me throw away those sleeping pills and get a good night's rest! Should there be any other member who has wrestled unsuccessfully with this one in similar frustration, here, my friends, is the solution:

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*****
**
** The question was:
** IF CARUSO EQUALS 84 AND GIGLI EQUALS
** 56, WHAT DOES CROSBY EQUAL?
**
** Solution:
** The 1st, 3rd and 5th letters of each
** word are given numerical values start-
** ing from the beginning of the alphabet
** (i.e. A=1, B=2, etc.). The 2nd, 4th
** and 6th letters are given numerical
** values starting from the end of the
** alphabet (i.e. Z=1, Y=2, etc.).
** Crosby equals 39 because on the above
** basis, C=3, R=9, O=15, S=8, B=2, Y=2:
** total 39.
**
** *****
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Have a nice summer!

BERT BISHOP

Members are invited to contribute towards Bert's quarterly columns by sending him any items of interest on which he can conduct, in his own inimitable way, a highly entertaining line of comment and opinion. Bert's address is printed at the foot of the title page.

Announcing 'DISC RESEARCH ENGLAND 'ARTISTE' CATALOGUES' - now available from the discographical 'wizz-kid', Jim Hayes. On receipt of a S.A.E. Jim will be pleased to send you information appertaining to a wide selection of catalogues which are currently being made available, listing artistes, titles, issue dates, catalogue numbers, matrix numbers, etc. on a variety (and eventually all, it is hoped!) of English 78 rpm record manufacturing companies. Already his 'REX 8000' series is selling like hot cakes. Write to Jim (mentioning "BING" magazine) at the following address:
161 BOWLAND DRIVE, LIVERPOOL, L21 0JA.

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 @ BING'S SPECIAL STAR @
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by EDWARD HALE

I am pleased to impart the following news to all members of the ICC. When Bing was ill earlier this year, my mother had the idea of getting me to make a 'star' for him. The star is about 9" in diameter and consists of about 100 special nails entwined with silk. The name 'Bing' is displayed around it and at the base of the star there is a musical 'note' made of silver metal with silk surrounding it. The star is constructed on a round wooden base with a gold trim on the outside edge and it can either be stood upright or hung on the wall.

The star has been sent by air mail to Bing so let's keep a hope in our hearts that Bing has received his 'Special Star' by the time you read this magazine. A letter was enclosed with the star, asking that when Bing has fully recovered he might care to have a photograph taken of himself with the star, so that we can print it in the magazine.

I understand that Bing's latest recording is entitled "Christmas star" but the one I've sent him was made some time before this song came to my notice. To all members, 'God bless you all'.

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The following letter recently appeared in the national press....

BING CROSBY is the most lovable little man in the world.
 Once I came face to face with him at a race meeting. He
 was so small and pale that he looked like Dresden china.
 I wish I could have spoken to him.
Mrs. L. Watkins, Southampton.

We can only conclude that Mrs. Watkins must be a very large woman with inferior eyesight! Having personally met Bing, your Editor - along with various other members - can truthfully say that he is by no means the small, pale man which this lady describes!

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 @ EVEN MORE PUBLICITY FOR THE ICC @
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On April 26th one of Southend-on-Sea's local newspapers, 'THE SOUTHEND AND DISTRICT NEWS', published a full-page article about the 'nostalgics'. Warren Lakin, the writer of the feature, used this term to describe the large number of 78 rpm record collectors located within the south-east corner of England. Interviews were published with four local 'personalities', the most well-known of these being John Gunn who edits the 'GUNN REPORT' (advertised in each issue of "BING"). To round off a highly entertaining page of reading, Lakin had this to say about our own organisation....

 * Adulation for "Old Groaner" Bing Crosby is *
 * as high as ever and the International Crosby *
 * Circle magazine caters for his past, present *
 * and future admirers, and is edited by John *
 * Bassett of Stromness Road, Southend. *
 * *****

The fact that complimentary copies of the newspaper are currently being distributed to homes throughout the area is evidence that the write-up has given the ICC useful publicity on a large scale, and we are grateful to the publishers for the 'plug'.

Footnote: It is worth placing on record the fact that a clever line drawing of Bing by Owen Peterson appeared on the front cover of the 'GUNN REPORT' for March-April (issue 45). The drawing was copied from a familiar photograph.

 * "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" (1926-1974) Now Available! (see p.3) *
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 C WILLOW WEEP FOR BING C
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by PETER DIFFLEY

APRIL - and, driven by the Editorial lash, I reach for a reluctant pencil. Outside, the sun beams rather guiltily upon a surprised but welcoming populace, failing to hide his embarrassment at having switched on the power so early in the season. That certain something is very tangible in the air, and already one can sense the cricket season swinging a tentative bat and preparing to whiten its boots.

By the time this article appears, several County matches will have been rained off, some temper-a-mental 'batsman' will have felled the Umpire in a fit of petulance at being given out, the economic situation will have worsened, yet another totally unimportant politician will have been 'found out', and the sun will have redeemed his former lapse by retiring to the Pavilion until the back end of September.

And what, you may well ask, has all this to do with Bing? Well, for a start, amidst the seething frustrations of modern life there mere mention of the name 'Bing Crosby' restores one to normality; the boiling blood simmers down to whatever degree normal blood usually burbles at; that thin red haze before the eyes rapidly clears, and the fingers cease their itching to be at the throats of "What d'ye call him, Thing'me bob, and likewise - never mind"....(readers can fill in their own blanks).

No reasonable man can remain irate when the image of Bing floats across his mind. That easy-going, serene, humourous and oh so friendly figure draws an immediate smile of genuine affection and regard. The sight of the man, or the sound of his voice, like the sight of wickets pitched on a village green or daffodils dancing in a March breeze, reminds one that there are still good things to be found in this troubled Earth of ours. Possibly we feel that in the empty noise and frenzy that surround us here is the one person that puts life into its right perspective: maybe we are secretly relieved to find that this perspective still exists, and are grateful to Bing for providing such indisputable proof of it.....or maybe Beer is best. Who knows?

The trouble is, of course, that there aren't many of us reasonable blokes about nowadays - "We few, we happy few, we band of...." nostalgic morons? Regrettably, the 20th century is littered with the remains of reason, contentment, good taste and good fellowship, and for my part I count myself fortunate to be drifting along in that exclusive debris together with all readers of this delightful and invaluable magazine.

("Come on, Diffley, stop wuffling and get to the point" - irate reader). Alright, alright, having whistled five paragraphs outside the off stump, this one is plumb on the wicket so fasten your safety belts and unclip your (lady readers please close your eyes for the next word) suspenders. In other words, prepare your miserable selves for a shock, for, having in previous articles put Bing on a pedestal, I now propose to knock him down. Yes, I have at last found a department in life where Bing registers a Venuti-type raspberry - where he is an abysmal and undoubted flop....read on if you dare.

The consensus of opinion has been that success has followed Bing's every venture down the years as inevitably as Spencer follows Marks: I now find this to be untrue. Granted, the man is a highly accomplished hunter, fisherman, businessman, actor, linguist, traveller, golfer, raconteur and (possibly) singer, but amid the deafening fanfare of his accomplishments there can faintly be heard one discordant note - one failure which I intend to expose - CROSBY CANNOT PLAY CRICKET!! The green fields, leather and willow know him not, and the President of the M.C.C. winces and turns sadly away at the mere mention of his name.

Why is this? Why has this fellow of such rare accomplishment failed so miserably to establish himself in WISDEN? I suppose firstly we must remember that for the past fifty years Bing has not even stood anywhere near the crease in his own trousers and it is perhaps asking a little too much to expect him to ground a bat within two inches of the popping crease. Not that he hasn't had his chance. That most splendid of craggy Englishmen, leader of Sussex and captain of the first M.C.C. team to visit South Africa, Sir C. Aubrey Smith ('lightly lie the turf upon him') ran a most remarkable team in Hollywood

and must surely have invited Bing to turn out for him at some time or another. But we have no record of Bing ever having done so. Possibly the dire experience of Hopalong Cassidy, who played (once!) made Bing rather wary....certainly it struck terror into the valient heart of Mr. Boyd.

Readers will recall the delightful story of Hopalong being asked to turn out when Sir Aubrey's team found themselves a man short. Completely new to the game, he gave the first ball he received an almighty wallop, in the best Babe Ruth tradition, and then, to the utter astonishment of Sir Aubrey, he dropped his bat where he stood and hared off towards point for the first leg of what I believe is termed a 'home run'. And then it happened: the sun was blotted out by an immense red face as Sir Aubrey neared apoplexy, and all that poor Hopalong could see was this immensity of red and purple lying behind a formidable white forest of bristling moustache and eyebrows, through which two electric blue eyes flared like lightning in a thunderstorm. The language was reasonably temperate, scorching only thirty yards of turf, which naturally (as Sir A had a fine sense of priorities) extended only over the outfield, leaving the wicket still fit to play on.

Experiences such as these tend to test the temper of a man, and I firmly believe it was on this occasion that Hopalong's hair turned white. Rumour also has it that his next two films had to be scrapped as the baddie kept beating him to the draw. Happily, he did eventually recover, although he never set foot on a cricket field again....

Still, I was supposed to be writing about Bing and why he flopped at cricket: I'll tell you why - simply because he never tried it. Nor could anyone imagine him swinging a bat. The thing's absurd. Look at it this way - (1) the game requires clothes of one colour. Whoever heard of Crosby wearing matching garments? His upper and lower registers have invariably been at considerable variance of shade, and it is common knowledge that three Saville Row tailors were carried away gibbering on stretchers after they had caught sight of Bing in one of his Palm Beach shirts; (2) the game requires a uniform. Since when has Bing confined himself to the irksome restrictions of a uniform? His whole life has been devoted to the glorification of the (if I may coin a word) multiform. The very idea of such restrictive appurtenances would be repugnant to our Mr. C; (3) the game involves definite physical exertion at frequent intervals. Highly distasteful to a man of Bing's temperament. After all, one commences by a violent whack at the ball, but after this one is permitted to stroll easily along in search of it for some three or four minutes, thus giving oneself time to recover from the shock of that first physical exertion.

No such casual approach besmirches the game of cricket. The batsman is required to make six definite blows every five minutes or so. Nor can he stroll nonchalanatly to the other end, chatting to all and sundry on the way, for in the intervals between hitting the ball he is supposed to dash wildly up and down, taking care not to colide with his partner and keeping a sharp look out for a hard ball that could come whizzing in from any direction and shatter his elbow.

A cricketing Crosby? Ludicrous and unthinkable. The man is totally unfitted by temperament for any game which requires unseemly haste and in which one is jerked into physical action at the dictates of others. Bing is unquestionablly a great sportsman, but mark how aptly his sports are geared to his personality - he casts a line, raises a gun and hits a golf ball exactly when he chooses to do so: he will not be hurried into action and he has naturally gravitated to those sports which allow most freedom of action for the participant, and which are distinguished chiefly by their casual appearance. Who ever saw Nicklaus in a hurry on the Green! And how many blissfully idle moments did Isaac Walton spend on the banks of the Dove before choosing to cast his line over a plump Derbyshire trout.

Cricket, on the other hand, compels even the most graceful of its luminaries into the occasional indignity. Hence the sublime Woolley haring up the wicket, all bat and pads, in a frantic effort to beat the lightning return of Jack Hobbs from cover - reduced, by a momentary indiscretion of his partner, to the level of common humanity.

Bing, then, is alas lost to cricket: but need it have been so? I think not, for there is one department of the game for which he is marvellously suited and

which he might have enjoyed - UMPIRE! Look at the scope it offers to the Crosby way of life. For a start, the duties are simply to stand still all day, watching and ruminating. True there is the occasional burst of action when a full-blooded hook comes whistling for the cranium, prompting the sudden duck or the more gentlemanly sidestep. And then look at the clothes! Variety is almost de rigueur - black, brown, blue or grey trousers with white boots or black shoes. Hats of all shapes and fashions; ties, to the wearer's own taste. True, one must wear the regulation white coat, but this can be an advantage when used as a setting for a vermilion tie.

What a picture for the imagination! Bing, the most popular Umpire in the game, pushing his hat over one eye and speeding the departing batsman with two quick choruses of "After You've Gone", then welcoming the incoming bat with a cheery burst of "I'm Gonna Get You". O cricket, O crumbs, O what a load of padding! Anyway, the Editor has just lifted an imperious finger and given me out....caught in the quips! I depart, trailing a dejected bat to the Pavilion. Yarooohhh.

CLOSE OF PLAY

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 @ CROSBY MANIA AT 15 @
 @@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

by BARRY FREESTONE

It all started during June 1972. I was watching television one evening when a programme commenced, featuring a review of films from the 1930's. One of the extracts shown was of Bing (possibly from a Mack Sennett 'short'), and he sang "Where The Blue Of The Night". I was 'hooked' there and then! I couldn't stop myself from humming the song, and a few days later I was visiting a friend and he was playing Sinatra's recording of "My Way". I told him that I thought Bing was far superior to Sinatra. After finding my remark highly amusing, he revealed that his father owned an LP of Bing, namely the Ace Of Hearts issue "BING - THE EARLY THIRTIES" (Vol.2) and he offered to play it for me. I had never heard such a singer to compare with Bing. Some while later, at a party, I heard Bing singing "Temptation" from the album "CROSBY CLASSICS" and I was so impressed I asked to have the record played again and again. The following weekend I paid a visit to a local record shop and purchased five LP's of Bing, and I've never looked back. I now own many 78's, 45's, EP's and over 80 LP's, and I must convey my thanks to Phil Clarke and Dave Carey who have proved very helpful in this respect over the last two years. I might add that my favourite period of Bing is 1931-1935, and in my opinion there will never be another singer to match him....and certainly not Sinatra!

The Editor will be pleased to hear from all new members. Brief autobiographies and details of record collections will be published for the interest of our readers. If possible, send along a black-and-white photograph of yourself - we like to see what you look like! Suitable pictures will be included in future issues of the magazine.

THE CREMO DIRECTORY - published by Larry Kiner, 7554 132nd Avenue, N.E., Kirkland, Washington, 98033, USA - details every one of Bing's radio broadcasts for Crema Cigars. The cost is \$2.50 (approximately £1). Please mention "BING" magazine when writing.

AMENDMENT to the last issue of this magazine - Reg incorrectly published Bing's address as being North Boulevard Avenue. To put the record straight, members wishing to drop Bing a line should address their letters to ...
 170 NORTH ROBERTSON BOULEVARD, BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA, 90211, USA.

All members are invited to contribute to the pages of "BING" - articles, letters, etc. Please address all correspondence to the Editor in time for September publication. Pressure of work prevents us from personally acknowledging your correspondence, but self addressed envelopes are always welcome if you do happen to require a reply by post. Our thanks in advance!

DEAR LESLIE....

Bing writes to LESLIE GAYLOR...

May 17, 1974

Dear Leslie:

Thank you for your letter, and answering the questions you propose - I'm coming along fine healthwise. I'm down in Baja California now playing a little tennis, some golf, and walking daily and I feel in another month or so I'll be back just as good as new.

I think I'm going to do a couple of TV shows. They have a comedy show planned with Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey, Carol Burnett and myself, but it hasn't been set yet.

Also, I'm going to do the Christmas show. Probably a couple of guest shots, too.

I've got an album under consideration, doing some old songs from around the time of Al Jolson. Some of the real old hits - Southern songs - with probably a modern type of accompaniment. I think Sonny Burke is interested in this.

Glad to hear "Yellow Ribbon" is still getting some play. It's a cute tune, and I'm glad to hear, too, of the re-releases on MCA Records.

I think it's a good idea that you've compiled a list of things that might be good for album suggestions. I don't really know what to select, when I go about such a chore, but you, having an objective position can do better.

Yes, I'll probably be coming to London this summer or spring.

Kathryn is busy in the theatre. She does three plays for ACT, and they alternate them on different days of the week.

She's doing "Cyrano de Bergerac", "Broadway" (a revival), and a new show called "Tonight at 8:30" about Noel Coward's work.

I'm delighted to hear that the country over there is getting back to normal. You've certainly had a tough struggle.

We have our problems, too, as you well know - but it's getting better.

Take care of yourself -

All the best,

(signed) Bing

Bing Crosby

*In checking, I find I don't have the album you mention -
"I'll Sing You A Song Of The Islands".

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

No self-respecting ICC member should be caught empty-handed - details are published elsewhere of our special discographical publications, so be certain to send your remittance without delay!

"JOLSONOGRAPHY" REPRINTED

The greatest reference book available
on the great AL JOLSON....

Due to the continuing demand for 'JOLSONOGRAPHY', a second printing of 250 copies has now been completed. The book was first published some years ago and it has proved to be the book on Jolson. It is a magnificent achievement and the result of over ten years' research by author Dave Jay. It is not a biography, nor in any way fictitious. It is a veritable encyclopaedia on Al Jolson, providing thousands of interesting facts and figures covering every aspect of this man's amazing career.

'JOLSONOGRAPHY' is 11" x 9" approximately, containing 284 pages and 135 photographs. It also contains an addenda comprising of late additions, amendments, etc., is bound in leathercloth and is gold blocked. In order to make this huge book more easy, and thus more enjoyable to read, 'JOLSON-OGRAPHY' has been divided into ten sections:-

- | | |
|------|------------------------------------|
| I | JOLSON DISCOGRAPHY (Comprehensive) |
| II | JOLSON DISCOGRAPHY (Simplified) |
| III | JOLSONIA DISCOGRAPHY |
| IV | JOLSON STAGEOGRAPHY |
| V | JOLSON SCREENOGRAPHY |
| VI | JOLSON RADIOGRAPHY |
| VII | JOLSON SONG-OGRA PHY |
| VIII | JOLSON SHEET-MUSIC-OGRA PHY |
| IX | JOLSON BIBLIOGRAPHY |
| X | JOLSON FACTOGRAPHY |

This book is so huge and comprehensive that the author (real name Dave Wigransky) found it impossible to publish the book in the USA because of the enormous costs involved in printing a book of this size. It was beginning to look as if the work he had devoted a great many years of his life to, would never be published. However, before his death, BARRIE ANDERTON acquired the publishing rights from him, and the price has been kept down to £15 (\$50 USA). It is expensive, but one must bear in mind that this is not an ordinary book. In it you will find everything you wish to know, or will ever need to know, about Al Jolson.

Postage is free on UK orders, USA is \$3 by surface mail - air mail is about \$10 (insured).

BARRIE ANDERTON is now accepting remittances in part or full for this book. Payment may be made in any form of currency (money order, postal order, cheque, etc.) and should be made payable to BARRIE ANDERTON. Every effort has been made to present 'JOLSONOGRAPHY' in a neat and attractive style, and to make it as easy to read as possible.

If you are undecided about buying this book, please remember that printing is limited to 250 numbered copies, and it is extremely unlikely that 'JOLSON-OGRAPHY' will be published again. You will never be able to buy a copy second-hand and you will not find it in your public library. The book is not available from commercial outlets, only from BARRIE ANDERTON.

Every Jolson admirer needs 'JOLSONOGRAPHY'....it will be a treasured and invaluable possession for the rest of your life. Write now to:-

BARRIE ANDERTON, 70 SOUTHCOTE ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS. ENGLAND.

Special note: ICC members will be interested to learn that 'JOLSONOGRAPHY' contains many pages devoted to every radio show featuring Bing and Al, along with dates, guest stars, songs, etc.

Barrie Anderton (address above) has also re-printed the book entitled 'MISTAH JOLSON' written by Al's brother, Harry. Copies are available at £2.50 each, including post and packing. (\$8.00 to Stateside members).

THE REMAINDER OF THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN COMPILED AND TYPED BY REG BRISTO.
Reg is now accepting remittances for the ICC's latest publication, "THE
BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" - only 45p a copy, post-paid.

WRITES "I JUST HAD TO GET WELL!"

..... Bing.....

Many readers will have received the charming and so-Bing card which has been sent out by Mr. Crosby to EVERYONE who wrote to him during his illness at the beginning of this year of 1974. One might well ask what other artist would have gone to this trouble? For the sake of posterity, it read as follows:

So many kind, encouraging words and prayers
came during my illness I just had to get well!

Many thanks.

Bing Crosby.

One lady, not a member of ours however, was so touched that she wrote and told the Daily Mirror about receiving this reply to her letter of good wishes. The Mirror too asked who else would have made this gesture - and remarked that Bing was a "proper gent".

But our good friend, Olive Gregory in Meols, Cheshire, seems to have the knack of drawing out interesting and indeed, lengthy letters from the Maestro. And this one gives really cogent and up-to-date news of how Bing is feeling - and what he plans:

April 1, 1974

Dear Miss Gregory,

Thank you for your most kind letter. I do appreciate a good deal what you have to say about me and my career, and how you've been a follower of some of the things I've done.

I don't know if OLD BLUE EYES will come back or not - I mean this "blue eyes"! I'm going to do a few little things. I'm starting to feel pretty good now, but I really hadn't planned much work anyhow.

But the things I had planned for January, February, March and April are going to have to be pushed ahead - or should I say, back.

In any case, I won't be able to do much work until June. And then I'll probably do some travelling or do some fishing.

I KNOW YOUR COUNTRY IS GOING THROUGH A TIME OF CRISIS JUST NOW, BUT WE'RE NOT HAVING IT SO GOOD OVER HERE, EITHER. YOU PEOPLE HAVE DEMONSTRATED IN THE PAST THAT YOU CAN OVERCOME CRISES, BUT WE'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN TESTED.

The next few months will supply the answer.

Well, thank you for writing. Sending along the picture you requested. I hope you like it. It's a fishing out when I went to Alaska last June.

Always yours, BING (BING CROSBY)

I just love that "old blue eyes" - as you will appreciate. I find it delicious, but I should mention that in her letter Olive had expressed the hope that OUR blue eyes would never have to make a "come-back" - because he must never go away!

But you also note the profound remarks of Bing regarding the conditions now reigning both in this country and the States. And when we consider the continuing agony of Ireland (especially close to Bing's heart), the unspeakable terrorism in the Middle East and the hi-jackings there is cause for sombre reflection indeed. Bing's remark about America never really being tested illustrates Bing's contemporary thinking.

However, you will note that Bing is "starting to feel pretty good now" - and that is the main message for us. The capitals used in reproducing Bing's letter are mine, and not his: but I felt they needed extra emphasis.

"I just had to get well...." You did Bing - and we are all grateful beyond measure. It is the hope of all of us that Bing might complete his recuperation in the green of a British summer, around the golf-courses he finds so attractive. And meet once more some of his constant British admirers. One just feels better to know Bing is here....

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INEVITABLY, THROUGH HIS LONG CAREER IN RECORDS, BING HAS MADE SOME PECULIARLY APPOSITE TITLES. For instance:

Thanks/Please.	Something in Common/Nothing in Common.
May I?/Would You?	Sunshine/Rain
Can I Forget You?/Remember Me?	I Apologise/Who's Sorry Now?
Strange Music/Bebop Spoken Here.	How Soon?/Never In A Million Years.
Lamplighter's Serenade/Let's Put out the Lights.	

Get the idea? Apposite, mildly amusing - or even intriguing. If you have any favourite titles that might have been coupled (none of the above were, incidentally) perhaps you will let us know and we'll use some of them.

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BING IS COMING! according to what must be the latest news contained in a report in the Sports section of the NEWS OF THE WORLD, 2 June:

".....using the week beginning Sept. 22 which has been set aside for the now-abandoned John Player Classic, the BBC's top producers Slim Wilkinson and Alan Mouncer have come up with...a golf package to be shewn as a seven-part series. Fourteen names have been submitted from Britain and America and seven celebrities will play in foursome matches over nine holes. Four of the men who run their own tournaments in America - Bing Crosby, Jackie Gleason, Perry Como and Andy Williams - are on the list. Said Wilkinson:

"We're not quite sure what handicap Bing has these days. But if we get him, and its highly likely, who cares how he plays?"

The report (which has been abridged here) carried an excellent picture of Bing, with the caption: "CROSBY - Welcome."

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WE'RE SORRY TO HARP ON ABOUT THE PAPER-SHORTAGE BUT IT REALLY IS NOW ACUTE. HOWEVER, NO EFFORT WILL BE SPARED TO OBTAIN SUPPLIES AND CARRY ON. THERE IS ONE IMPORTANT WORD OF WARNING, HOWEVER, AND THAT IS FOR THOSE READERS WHO BIND, OR FILE, THEIR COPIES OF "BING". REGRETTABLY IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE SIZE OF THE PAPER USED. THIS WILL ONLY BE DONE IF IT PROVES IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN THE CURRENT SIZE OF PAGE. ANY CHANGE, SHOULD IT COME ABOUT, WILL BE TO A SMALLER PAGE. Such a regrettable change will at least enable us to publish the magazine, and the forbearance of the "binding readers" (to coin a phrase!) is solicited.

"ON THE AIR"

..... AND WHAT IT HAS MEANT

The air-waves, in fact - for this was the phrase that was coined to describe broadcasting, the then-miracle of sending sound faithfully through the air. I say then miracle, though of course, it remains to me at least, still a miracle even though we have now come to accept the bonus-miracle of pictures through the air in rather blase fashion - even when they are "bounced" round the word via satellite! I remember the sad little jokes that used to be made about "wireless", pointing out that a set was a mass of wires.....but there were no wires between the transmitter and the receiver. Hence, wireless - sounds literally "on the air".

I find myself wondering what, apart from his enormous gifts, was the largest factor in Bing's fabulous career. But one doesn't need to wonder too long, for this biggest factor must have been radio - or wireless. Bing could have sung for the rest of his life with Paul Whiteman, and reached only a miniscule fraction of the audience he came later to reach. True, he might have got further with Gus Arnheim or Jimmie Grier for they were regular, even nightly, broadcasters. Both broadcast more often than Whiteman even though only on local radio, as it were. And Bing made a measurable advance in his career with Arnheim and Grier.

But the blockbuster-impact came with Statewide broadcasting, as we all well know. After that sensational coast-to-coast debut in New York the records began to flow in increasing numbers, the films followed as an equally natural consequence. It is known that Bing himself always ascribes his big break to radio - while not forgetting to mention in his typical fashion that he was "lucky". Well, may be there was an element of luck in the timing: radio had emerged from the cats-whisker crystal era when only a small minority of people had a set and the day of the super-set, with moving coil-speakers and other refinements was dawning.

And as with all innocations it demanded a whole new set of figureheads: so cometh the hour, one might say, cometh the man! And that man assuredly was Bing Crosby. Yet its wrong to think that Bing was THE first singer to make a radio-impact. Gene Austin comes to mind, and most certainly Rudy Vallee - tho' of the latter, who indeed had a huge following on both sides of the Atlantic, I once read that he was walking down Broadway one night and heard the voice of Crosby booming out from some loudspeakers singing "I Found a Million Dollar Baby". Rudy said: "...and I knew my days as the radio singer were numbered...."

It was, no doubt at all, in 1931/32 that the "first generation" of the "new" performers really arrived: Bing, The Mills Brothers, the Boswell Sisters, the Street Singer, Donald Novis, Burns & Allen - and bandleaders by the score, of whom Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington to name but two became the proverbial "household names". It can hardly have been a surprise when, following their "voices only" broadcasts, there was a demand to see them and the historic film "Big Broadcast of 1932" was quickly scheduled - the first full-length film in which Bing was starred as opposed to his "bits" in "King of Jazz" with the Whiteman band. And the Mack Sennet shorts, of course.

I read somewhere that all the sounds ever made in this world are still in existence, floating around somewhere and would be audible if the technical means were available to segregate them and make them audible again. One can only hope that no-one accidentally stumbles on this mighty technical secret and hears all those sounds at once! Be that as it may - and after television and trips to the moon I'm prepared to believe it! - the mind is already inclined to boggle at the vast amount of sound that has already been recorded from radio, leaving out entirely the sounds that have NOT been broadcast!

This reverie has been inspired by the latest two TOTEM albums I've obtained - both of them featuring Bing of course. If ever there was musical history, it is on the first of these, BING CROSBY - "ON THE AIR", and the sleeve accurately notated: NEVER BEFORE ON RECORD! When I studied the sleeve, preparatory to playing the record and saw that it included songs from the Cremo Cigar Shows of 1931 I trembled at the nerve of the

producers. Let's face it, 1931 is a long, long while ago now - 43 years ago, of course. And recording of all kinds left much to be desired - I am mindful of the inherent surface "hiss" of even the best of 78rpm commercial recordings of those days. I have heard recordings, of course, of the 1931 programmes but one listens to these with a fair degree of tolerance bearing in mind the antiquity of the recordings.

But I am left wondering just HOW such recordings have survived. Tape recorders did not, at their earliest, come into use until the 40's. And broadcasts recorded in advance on 16-inch - of which incidentally, Bing was a pioneer - was not in operation surely in 1931? So, what is the source of 1931 broadcast recordings? I just don't know. Whatever their source, they have survived, miraculously survived. Vivid Crosby history, culled, snatched from the ether...."ether" was another term to denote the broadcasting of sound-waves in those far-off days, and is so redolent of those wonderful (as far as music went!) days. Snatched from the ether, from the air by some miracle...so that as you listen to these programmes you are uncannily back in those days....when radio was vital, alive so that once again you feel the thrill of this astonishing voice going out anew, as it seems, over the air-waves.

The album, TOTEM 1008 consists of the following:

Side One: Woodbury Radio Programme, 18 September, 1934, with the Boswell Sisters, Georgeie Stoll and his Orchestra, Kenneth Niles,

Side Two: Kraft Musical Hall Sections:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. On the Sentimental Side | 31 March 1938 |
| 2. I Simply Adore You. | 24 March 1938 |
| 3. Smiles. | 7 October, 1937. |
| 4. Remember Me? | 7 October, 1937. |

AND!

Cremo Singer Selections:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 5. Guilty. | 7 Nov. 1931. |
| 6. Kissable Baby. | 7 Nov. 1931. |
| 7. I Cried for You. | 7 Nov. 1931 |
| 8. As Time Goes By. | 6 Dec. 1931. |

True, most of this if not all of it, has been available on tapes of sorts for many years. I have some myself, but "I Simply Adore You", "Smiles", come fresh to me. What a pity Bing never did a commercial recording of that good song, "Guilty".

These sides are virtually the whole of the broadcasts, commercials, 'an all - and in passing, I wonder if I am wrong in thinking that invariably Bing seemed to take the mickey out of the goods, or the firm, that was sponsoring him? One certainly gets that impression with Philco products of the time! It is during the Cremo selections, after Bing has sung "I Cried For You" that a really wonderful moment arrives....the band plays on, you hear it fade slightly, and the announcer comes on saying it is the Columbia Broadcasting System, broadcasting from New York...and Bing carries on, seemingly nonchalantly in the background, scat-singing and ad-libbing in the most amazing musical fashion. This captures the spirit of the time more than anything else, I feel. It makes wonderful listening.

I am not going to pretend that some recording genie has turned these ancient programmes into hi-fi for that is an impossibility; but I do feel the best possible versions have been obtained and transferred to this LP. The 1937/38 parts are very good; the 1931 and 1934 are not hard on the ears at all. It's strange that one can adjust to a bit of background noise for assuredly, the voice of Bing comes through clear and positive. In fact, that is very noticeable - some people insist that Bing always sounds better on 78s than on those same 78s transcribed to micro-groove. So it is on these old broadcast recordings. I feel this must have something to do with the modern manner of making recording

a much more difficult and complicated proceeding than it need be. So many tapes are taken simultaneously of the various sections of the orchestra, plus the solo voice, and then some "mixer" has the enormously difficult job of "producing" (and that is the word) the finished master. Hence, the singer is often out of balance, or one section of the orchestra is, or indeed, one hears the harmony more prominently than the melody. I have vivid examples in modern records of all these things. In a solo vocal record the singer was, and should be, predominant and that's how it used to be - and it shows in Bing's 78s and for that matter, anyone else's.

And the question of tape v record arises; personally, though I lean heavily on taping for material I could not otherwise get, basically I much prefer a disc record. I can advance no tangible reason, unless I feel the recording is "brighter" and has those frequencies more felt than heard, perhaps. I am very glad to have this historic stuff of the 1931 Bing on disc and I feel most collectors will be glad of the opportunity.

Younger collectors - those who have no memories of the early 30's - cannot, I fear, experience quite the same feelings as those who can when listening to these vital, early, beginnings of Bing's career. Nevertheless, I know a lot of them do have the ability and imagination to turn back the clock and assuredly, these TOTEM recordings will be of considerable imaginative assistance. And by the way, the Boswell Sisters, those illustrious girls who were the forerunners for the Andrews Sisters as far as Bing is concerned, sound just great in the 1934 Woodbury programme, singing their famous "Heebie Jeebies". Georgie Stoll, whose band takes a solo spot also, is introduced by Bing as the "newest Hollywood favourite". As I said, historic moments snatched from the ether, when being "on the air" was the ultimate for an artist.

A thought to conjure with is that Bing was 30 years of age in 1931, and we can only ponder on how it would have been if Bing had had the "modern" treatment of today's so-called "teenage wonders" --- when he WAS a teenager? But that, of course, brings us back full circle to the luck and the timing: it just could not have happened that way at all in 1921 with no radio, and gramophone recording fairly bizarre.

TOTEM LP 1007, although again "NEVER BEFORE ON RECORD", is a rather different kettle of fish. From the historic angle one might say it is comparatively recent! Once again, the material is fairly familiar to a lot of us on tape, consisting as it does of :

"BING AND AL" - Side One: The Bing Crosby Show 28 December, 1949

1. I've Got A Lovely Bunch of Coconuts.
2. Sorry.
3. Swanee.
4. When The Red Red Robin Comes Bobbin Along.
5. I only Have Eyes for You.
6. Waiting for the Robert E. Lee.
7. I Can Dream Can't I?

Side Two: The Bing Crosby Show 4 January, 1950.

1. Dear Hearts and Gentle People.
2. Bye Bye Baby.
3. Is It True What They Say About Dixie?
4. Carolina in the Morning.
5. My Blue Heaven.
6. Alabama Bound.
7. The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else.
8. All By Myself.

This album, bounding forward 20 years almost in time, is a vastly different proposition as regards audio-quality; it is not far short of hi-fi and comparable, certainly, to any reissue album of 78s. Taping was well-established when these programmes were broadcast and of course, is reflected in this considerably higher quality of sound.

In fact, the quality is probably a lot better than actually heard on the air in 1949 and 1950. No background, no hiss, excellent quality.

And if you have never heard Bing singing "I've Got A Lovely Bunch of Coconuts" - as I hadn't - you're in for a surprise at his "English" accent! Together with John Scott Trotter and Jud Conlon's people its a good performance.

Bing sings "Sorry" and "Dear Hearts and Gentle People" in lovely style, with subtle and indeed distinct variations from the commercial issues. The same applies to "All By Myself". Unlike some reissues from hitherto unknown sources, these albums are full of Bing and on this one Bing is either singing in good voice solo, or taking a 50 per cent share in duets with the great Al Jolson. Al was, of course, riding on the crest of a wave at this particular time, the two great films on his life having brought him back with a bang - and rightly so - as did these appearances on Bing's celebrated radio programme. And it shows in these performances for both Bing and Al are in wonderful form.

There is considerable humorous exchange as a prologue to, and between songs, and as I remarked earlier, the full "commercials". I give it as my opinion that these are valuable additions to anyone's Crosby collection.

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THESE ALBUMS ARE READILY OBTAINABLE FROM: LARRY KINER, 7554 132nd Avenue, N.E.
Kirkland, Wash. 98033,
United States of America.

EACH ALBUM - and I forgot to say above they are all adorned with excellent and fairly rare pictures of Bing - costs 5.50 dollars, which is £2.20p in our currency, plus the postage, packing, and in a letter to me Larry suggests 80p for the first three albums, then 35p for any additional album.

A SINGLE ALBUM POSTAGE IS ABOUT 1.50 dollars, i.e. 50p.

I know money is not all that plentiful, and that there is a lot of reissued material now becoming available. On the other hand, while these albums are not cheap, neither are they expensive and it is felt at least fair to let you know as much as possible about the TOTEM issues. But no-one, least of all yours truly, is urging you to rush around splashing your cash about. But there they are - if you want them. They are good value.

Larry Kiner is the States member who produced the Cremo Directory described in the last issue of BING and in a further letter he tells me he has produced a new card cover for the directory, making the whole thing more durable, as he says. People who have had the directory can have a new cover for 40p air mail, or 20p surface mail. If such a member orders a record and states he has the directory, the new cover will come automatically.

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Finally, TOTEM 1002 (see last issue) Bing's Philco Shows Oct. 16 1946 and Feb 19 1947
TOTEM 1003 " " " " " " Mar. 5 1947, and April 2 1947
TOTEM 1004: "She Loves Me Not", from 1937.
TOTEM 1007: Bing "On the Air" 1931 and 1934.
TOTEM 1008: Bing and Al. 1949 and 1950.
TOTEM 1009: Bing, Bob and Judy (Garland). - dating from 1950.

I have review^{ed} only the records I have personally HEARD. And what I've heard inspires confidence in those I have not heard. And if you are still searching for the Pelican album SOFT LIGHTS & SWEET MUSIC - Larry can supply that, too.

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Well, what with US readers, Canadian and Australian readers, as well as European readers, your poor old secretary is rapidly becoming a foreign exchange expert - as well as round-shouldered (from typing), not to mention bleary-eyed! As John Bassett soliloquises to me: it MUST be a labour of love.....

SHORT POINTS

(42)

Arnold Fogel, one of our Stateside friends, surprised me not only by telling me he is 27 but also that he is a professional musician, singer and song-writer! His tastes are very wide - Beatles to Bach almost with the accent, of course, on Bing Crosby - in whom he has been very interested since he was 12. Arnold tells me candidly he often violently disagrees with my views - but always finds them interesting and colourful. And that is nice. He disagrees with me over "long-hair" - and some contemporary pop music. Fair enough - generation gap, I guess! I don't doubt there are some good and intelligent youngsters playing their pop - but we can be forgiven for believing that a large proportion of today's pop is bizarre, inspired as we so often later discover by drugs....and I must confess that I find the odd rock 'n roll number at a dance good fun, even though, regrettably, it means letting go of your partner! Still, as Arnold says, we are FRIENDS! Mind you, I have seen long hair which is quite kempt - its when it resembles a stick of wind-blown candy-floss that I tend to go off it!

Its astonishing to consider that the epic issue by Brunswick of BING'S HOLLYWOOD, Nos. 1 to 15 were first seen more than 10 years ago now. Unhappily, many readers are anguished that they cannot obtain these great records. It would certainly be a tremendous thing if EMI/MCA saw their way clear to reissue them for they constitute the basis of ANY Crosby collection. I have heard that these records may indeed reappear, but I hasten to add there is no official word. Oddly, these records can STILL be picked up in large, well-stocked shops - especially those that never hold a sale of old stock! On the other hand, I recall a couple of readers in the Birmingham area picking 'em up for 10/- apiece! about five years ago. The two following readers are the latest to enquire if anyone can help: John Bayles, 123 Colvin Gardens, Ilford, Essex, and Mr. R. C. Shayler, 40 Wroxall Rd. Solihull, Warwickshire... Tappings are, of course, fairly easily come by.... and watch the secondhand shops, of course.

Does anyone recall a film, made in 1937, called ONCE A HERO? It starred Richard Dix

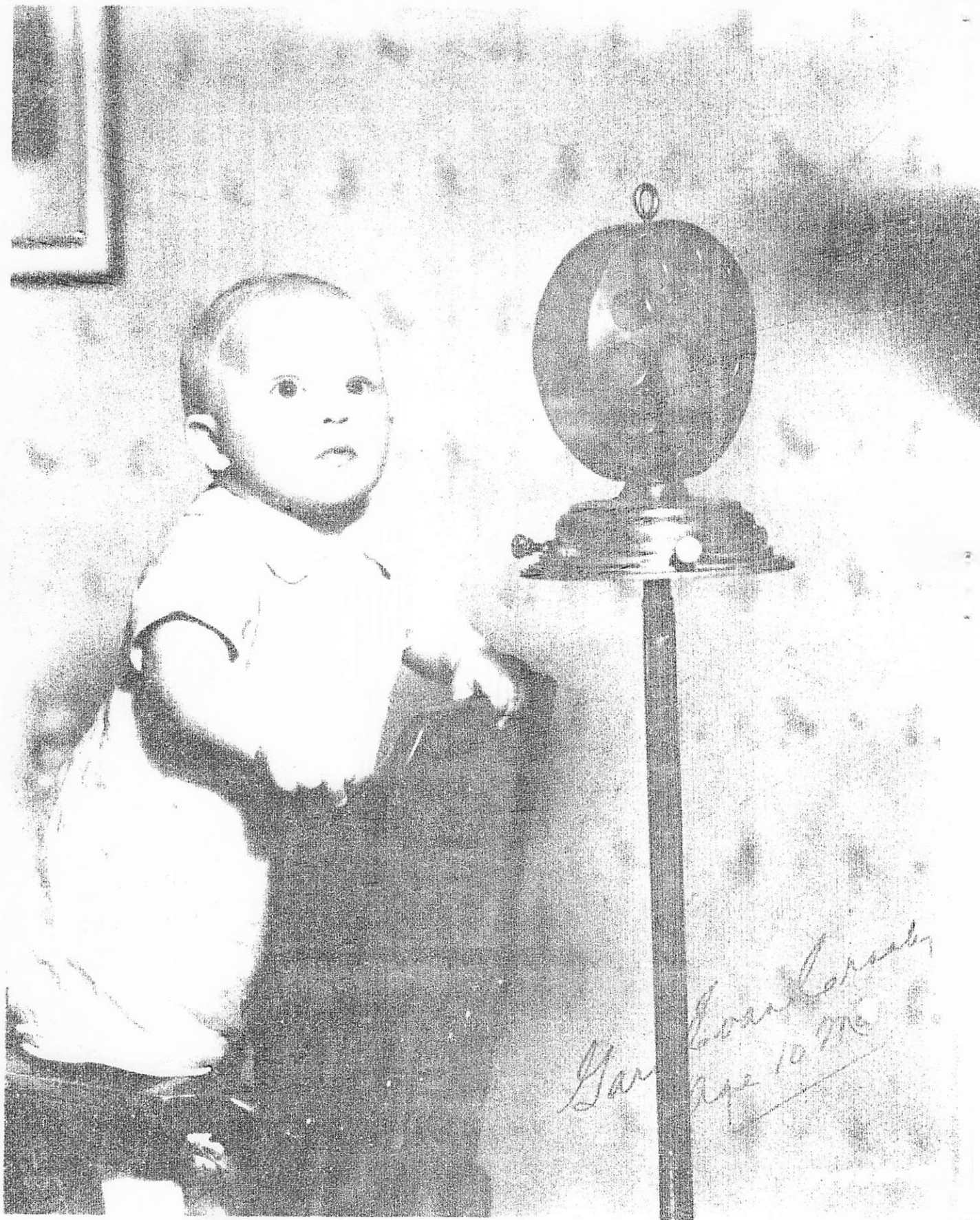
An album is in the shops by Harry Stoneham and his musicians - they are the outfit which plays for the Parkinson Show and its called "It All Happens on Saturday Night". The sleeve bears a picture of Harry and Michael Parkinson - whose chief claim to fame is, of course, that he conducted the most momentous TV interview with Bing ever screened. "June In January" is one of the songs on the album - and the sleeve notes remark "...these songs will serve to remind us of BING CROSBY, who proved that the bigger they are the nicer they are....."

Regarding our quiz, the smart readers will be sharp to point out that yet another album shows Bing with a pencil in his hat - the new EMI/MCA blockbuster! Twenty titles on one album! This actually appeared the day after the quiz was dreamed up!

PETER DIFFLEY has drawn our attention to a book, EDDIE CONDON'S SCRAPBOOK OF JAZZ, published by Robert Hale at the price of 24.85....hmmmm! This book contains about six photographs of Bing...if you can run to that price. Two of the photographs are full-page, with four smaller ones. Bing, apparently, is godfather to one of Eddie's children. Eddie died fairly recently, you will recall - and he accompanied Bing on a select number of recordings. He was certainly my kind of jazz-man, Eddie. He hated all the pretensions that are often cultivated about jazz; he believed, as I do, that jazz is simple, happy, music - and should be left that way.

and in the course of the story (I quote Reg Hampton of Southampton) "... someone played Bing at a party for a little crippled boy and sang 'Let's Fall In Love'...I never saw the film in 1937, being six years old, but I did see it one night in 1949 at Grantham when in the RAF...you can imagine my pleasure, being such a Bing fan...."

I'm not clear whether Bing actually appeared in this film from Reg's notes....Fred Reynolds, main author of Bing's mammoth film-book THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD, knows nothing of the film. Does anyone? Let us know..... Reg Hampton added a nice little note: "For years I have often been down to Portsmouth and pass thereby a public house called The Harbour Lights and I have wondered if it had anything to do with the song of that name... (cont. next page





CROSBY QUIZ

Quizzes are universally popular - here is one about our favourite artist....

Some of the questions are simple; others not quite so elementary! But, if you cannot answer them then assuredly it will teach you something about Bing!

- (1) What profound part did Messrs. Turk and Ahlert play in Bing's career - and for that matter, continue to play?
- (2) On which album sleeves does Bing appear wearing, or displaying:
 - (a) a pencil in his hat?
 - (b) a Union Jack?
 - (c) A Moustache?
 - (d) an earring?
 - (e) a red mitten?
 - (f) jeans?
- (3) Do all Bing's albums contain, on the front, a photograph, a portrait, or a "caricature" of him? The immediate answer will probably be "Yes!" But there are several that do NOT. Can you name, say, four of them?
- (4) "Sweetheart let us wander, upwards to the hill -
Where the sun is setting - where it's peaceful still...."

This is the prologue, or verse, to a lovely record of Bing's. Which?
- (5) In which recording of Bing's does the following appear?

"..some unbelieving miscreant..."
Surely a memorable imprecation?
- (6) "Being only a crooner, I felt that I didn't have sufficient stature as a singer to sing....." - to which song was Bing referring when he wrote this?
- (7) Most Crosby admirers now know that I'VE GOT THE GIRL is generally regarded as Bing's first recording; he was subsequently involved in many, many, records as the "vocal refrain" provider - but which two songs were the first solo records for Bing - and issued under his name instead of that of a band?
- (8) What was the first song Bing sang over nationwide radio - as opposed to "local station" broadcasting? As a solo artist, of course.
- (9) SONGS I WISH I HAD SUNG (THE FIRST TIME AROUND): the album, of course, featuring songs that had been big hits for other celebrated artists - which artists were associated most with the following songs?
 - (a) Prisoner of Love.
 - (b) Thanks for the Memory.
 - (c) Paper Doll.
 - (d) Mona Lisa.

This quiz is for amusement only because it would be extremely difficult to compile one for prize purposes whereby every reader had a fair chance! Such a list of questions requires one to have either a comprehensive collection of Bing's records, a full discography, and all sorts of books &c. written about Bing, as well as an exceedingly retentive memory. The answers to the above quiz appear further on in this issue.

SMILES FROM "CALL ME LUCKY"

A NEW SERIES: With acknowledgements to Bing Crosby, and Simon & Schuster, New York.

Bing's autobiography was published in 1953 under the above title and is long out of print. There is no doubt that many of our readers would gladly purchase this book should it be reissued, especially if it were revised and brought up to date. However, there is no prospect, seemingly, of this highly desirable event.

The book is written in the first person - as if it is Bing himself writing - though the title-page is notated: "As Told to Pete Martin". It is a very, very humorous book and undoubtedly Pete used verbatim tapes that Bing had dictated for the phrasing is undoubtedly the crisp, laconic, ultra-brief in description but most telling vernacular that Bing delights in - and Bing absolutely refuses, throughout the book, to take what he loosely terms "his career", seriously. Except when he is talking about the fans who have been "so kind to me".

Indeed, there are those among us no doubt who would wish that Bing had treated his own life-story with more seriousness - in more depth. Not to the exclusion of what has been written, especially the humour. But it would have been precisely to our taste if Bing had dwelt in more depth (to use the contemporary phrase!) on certain aspects of his incredible career. For example, it would have been fascinating, I am certain, if Bing had told us more about his recording career - how he felt about his so-regular visits to the studios to put up to half a dozen titles on wax at one session; more about the bands and instrumentalists he worked with - the Andrews Sisters, the Mills Bros and so many more. He does mention all these people, of course, but not in the depth that would have been highly acceptable to the Crosby admirer. It could be argued by Bing - and rightly so no doubt - that this would have turned it into a massive tome. And it would. But who would object to that!

It is in his book that Bing rather reluctantly admits that if he did indeed make a record worth listening to it was "My Isle of Golden Dreams". And Bing mentions various other songs and their writers, yet I for one would have been tremendously interested if we had had more of Bing's likes and dislikes of the songs he has recorded; any songs that gave him particular trouble in recording, whether he always approved of the arrangements, etc. etc. But then, Bing being Bing he has forgotten most of the songs he recorded! We must somewhat reluctantly admit that this trait with so many others, makes Bing what he is - the one real superstar of all time.

However, I am getting far away from the current subject. It is my intention to run a series of what may be called anecdotes from Bing's book, under the above heading. There is no such anecdotes - highly humorous. I feel this will prove popular with readers, even though they may have had the opportunity of reading CALL ME LUCKY.

For the first I have selected what is, for me, the funniest story in the book, but this does not imply that everyone will take the same view. We'll see. It concerns Bing's days with the Paul Whiteman orchestra when that rumbustious and rather eccentric character Joe Venuti was also in the band. Among Joe's eccentricities, of course, is the one that makes him the world's greatest jazz violinist. I feel Bing's descriptive power is such - and its not lengthy - that you are THERE!

Anyway, Bing described it as follows - on the next page.....

IT WILL HELP CONSIDERABLY IN THESE TROUBLOUS ECONOMIC TIMES IF READERS RECEIVING THE "SUBS REMINDER" WITH THIS ISSUE REMIT PROMPTLY.....Secretary -
REG BRISTO, 7, Greenmeadow Close, C W M B R A N, MON. NP4 3NR.

"There's only one rule with Joe (Venuti). If he says he's going to do a thing, you'd better believe him, because it's a certainty, no matter how goofy it sounds.

I remember when we were with the Whiteman band and playing concerts that we played an evening concert in San Diego to a black-tie audience. We were arrayed on a big stage banked with flowers. The programme was almost entirely Gershwin, featuring the 'Concerto' and the 'Rhapsody'. But for a change of pace we were to give out with a medley of Victor Herbert songs. I was sitting in the fiddle section cradling my prop violin, the one with the rubber strings. I also had a little humming called harmony-humming to do through a megaphone as a background for an instrumental solo.

Joe was seated next to me. They started the Victor Herbert section and were going along swimmingly, playing things like 'Gipsy Sweet-heart' and 'Dance, Gipsies' and 'Italian Street Song'. They were getting ready to play 'When You're Away, Dear', when Joe turned to me and whispered, 'I think I'll sing this chorus.'

I told him, 'You must be out of your mind.'

'Anyhow,' he said, 'I think I'll sing. Hey Paul!'

Whiteman was busy conducting and following the score, but he took time out to whisper to Joe, 'What do you want?'

'I'm going to sing the next chorus,' Joe said.

'Joe,' Paul said, 'you know I've got a weak heart. Don't be silly. Play your violin.'

But Joe was firm. 'I've got to sing it, Paul!' he said. 'I've got to do it. I feel it coming on.'

Paul was conducting the modulation and was getting closer and closer to the melody. When it arrived Joe stood up, put his fiddle on his chair, reared back and sang the whole chorus from start to finish with a real stale concert-baritone type of delivery. He sings like Jerry Colonna, with long notes and screaming and hollering effects. When he got to the end, instead of hitting the last note vocally, he gave out the loudest razzberry I've ever heard.

It shook the rafters.

While he was singing, the audience didn't know whether to take it seriously or whether he was clowning. Coming as it did in the middle of a medley it was hard for them to believe that he was being comical. But when he gave out that razzberry, it removed any question from their minds. The applause almost atomized the theatre.

Then Joe sat down. He seemed very happy. I thought Whiteman would have apoplexy, but he pulled himself together enough to conduct the rest of the Herbert medley.

It would be nice to think Paul Whiteman kept Joe's vocal in the medley! But what an experience for Whiteman - and clearly there was seldom a dull moment with Joe Venuti around.

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ ON PAGE 45

- (1) With Bing adding something, they were the composers of WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT - probably the most famous "signature" tune ever.
- (2) (a) Bing's Buddies & Beaus.
 (b) Hey Jude, Hey Bing!
 (c) BING I - but this was for his film-role in MISSISSIPPI.
 (d) BING II - also for a film role.
 (e) I Wish You A Merry Christmas.
 (f) On both Home on the Range and Rhythm on the Range.
- (3) The Old Masters, Vols. 1, 2 and 3 do not; nor do the autobiography records; Drifting & Dreaming, and the sleeve of How The West Was Won. Additionally, none of the early 10" LPs featured pictures. There are probably other instances.
- (4) When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby.
- (5) This description was applied to a member of the audience at a lecture when the speaker said that the birds were still flying about singing their pretty little heads off despite being "all petrified" (petrified, e.g. turned to stone) in the forest which had received similar treatment. This is the substance, of course, of the famous poem beautifully proclaimed by Bing in HOW THE WEST WAS WON. The poem is described as "Traditional".
- (6) Adeste Fidelis: Bing describes this reaction, when Jack Kapp was widening Bing's recording repertoire, in "Call Me Lucky", his autobiography.
- (7) Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams, and Just A Gigolo.
- (8) Just One More Chance - on Sept. 2nd, 1931 - the broadcast, incidentally, which literally made Bing a "household name" all over the States.
- (9) (a) Russ Columbo - who played violin, and sang with the Gus Arnheim Band concurrently with Bing and died as the result of a pistol-cleaning accident.
 (b) Bob Hope, whose record of this song with Shirley Ross became a big hit and is still heard quite often.
 (c) The Mills Brothers.
 (d) Nat King Cole.

=====

Some of the above was dreamed up by Lionel Pairpoint: it is not easy to compile a quiz where everyone can answer SOME of the questions - and some readers would skim through them contemptuously! Such is the nature of Crosbyana: diehard experts and tenderfoots! But, as was stated on the quiz-page, for those to whom the questions were a profound mystery, they will have learned something thereby and thus added to their Crosby lore. In an intriguing manner, I venture to suggest.

Any reader feeling the desire to compile a quiz, bearing the inhibiting factors in mind, is cordially invited to do so and let me have it. I suppose we could extend the idea by having differing quizzes for different age groups; but on reflection that would not be such a grand idea - there are some youngsters who can teach me a thing or two about Bing! Yet no doubt we could have a "simple" quiz, and an "advanced" one!

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YES INDEED!

IT'S READY! The long-awaited complete mini-discography is now ready to be posted to you....

And it joins those other diligently-produced publications THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY, and the BING CROSBY LP-OGRAHY. This is the complete listing of Bing's recordings from 1926 to date and is only called "mini" because it does not give the scores of different labels on which Bing's records were issued all round the world. Every title, every date, every master and take is listed. Now you can check what Bing recorded on your 21st birthday, and whether he recorded BEGIN THE BEGUINE before or after THESE FOOLISH THINGS! Or any other discographical problem you may have. You can accurately date the listing of your own collection - and above all, you can browse over it almost indefinitely. All for 45p, post paid!

Should your mini-discography, this issue of BING, or ANY OTHER of our publications contain a blank page, or even a page missing, you do not have to suffer. Write to me, Reg Bristo, and either the missing pages or more likely, a complete new copy will be sent to you. It is hoped this sort of omission is very rare but it does occur, despite extensive checking of copies before issue. Manifestly, copies cannot be checked 100 per cent but as many checks as possible are made.

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We are really on the residue of copies of the A to Z and the LPography - so if you missed out on these it is essential you hurry: £1 each, post paid. You don't have to have both, of course! And once again, the mini-discography is - 45p, post paid.

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RECORD SHOPS today present a complicated array of segregations. Well, complicated tho' some may find them humorous. I mean, "Progressive", "Contemporary", "Rhythm & Blues", and - a real beauty! - SOUL! Its amusing when you consider Bing effortlessly covered the lot without finding such pretentious labels necessary. What about the Country and Western label for the good old cowboy song? This thought is prompted by my story on the double-album HOW THE WEST WAS WON in the March BING and the correspondence it brought me. One reader declared that this set undoubtedly confirmed Bing as the greatest C & W singer of all time. I couldn't agree more profoundly - and he slotted it all in with the scores of categories of songs he took nonchalantly in his stride - like carols, Hawaiian, jazz, blues, duets, hymns, Stephen Foster ballads, songs for children, patriotic songs - why even lousy songs! I Hasten to add the only one in this category was the perpetration of BEBOP SPOKEN HERE - and even then, Bing sang this drivel better than anyone else! Though come to think of it, STYLE with the so-called Clan wasn't that much better....And reverting back to those Totem issues, I noticed that early on Bing was introducing his radio show with - LOVE IN BLOOM!

On the credit side - back to record shops - one of our locals is now displaying for the first time for years a "BING CROSBY" section all to itself! And it includes a score of albums - the seven Corals, Bing 'n' Basie, Dixieland Bands, Time to be Jolly, the new "Best of Bing", the Hallmark "Classics", Bing & Louis On Stage, Bing and Rosie Clooney, Special Magic of Bing and Louis, Merry Christmas - what's that, 16? Well, nearly a score! So, that's a step in the right direction, considering this same shop puts the Tijuana Brass under "Military Bands", and Victor Silvester's Strict Tempo Dance Orchestra under "Light Orchestral", together with the Rossini overtures!

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My warmest thanks to all those readers who have written to me with such interesting letters. Please accept this as a grateful acknowledgement if I haven't replied - usually because no reply was indicated - just goodwill.

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A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS: K. Anderson, California, USA; Derrick Anderson, Wombwell; John Bignell, Wembley; Joseph Carso, California; Ray Elliot, Coleraine; R.W.Gordon, Netley Abbey, Southampton; D.J.Hunt, East Barnet; Mrs. F.M.Kirk, Sherwood, Notts., Mrs. Grace Lambert, London, Bob Machliss, Australia; Dick Pearson, Tottenham, (cont.

Miss P.J. Forster, E. Twickenham and John Salisbury, Somersham, Hunts. And I'm not at all sure we have given the big "Hello!" to Alston W. Sutton, Sacramento, California and Frank Sylvester of Parma, Ohio....truly its an International Circle.

TOPICS FROM HULL

..or High Water: ----- by ALF FARROW =====

(I understand our friends in the Hull area now come from the county of - HUMBERSIDE and they do not seem all that delighted about it! Hitherto they were East Yorkshire.....and indeed, Monmouthshire becomes Gwent! Tho' not officially YET...

I rather fancy that Peter Diffley would expect some sort of reply to his remark at the end of his excellent article in the last issue to the effect that "I know of nothing more relaxing than this fine balladeer" - PERRY COMO! It may be Peter was speaking tongue-in-cheek but in case not and even so, liking Perry as I do, I can think of a much more relaxing time than listening to Perry....listening to one Bing Crosby! Still, we like Peter's stories and hope he keeps them going....

(Can I, Reg Bristo, but in a moment Alf? I think Peter meant what he said! And no tongue in cheek &c. Perry is undoubtedly a fine singer - and relaxing. What is more, he is getting some dam' fine material these days. Would that Bing was getting the same resources. On the other hand, Perry entered the permissive stakes in no mean fashion. I mean:

"Put your head upon my pillow, lay your warm and tender body close to mine.....for the good times....."

Without quarrelling unduly with the sentiments - I ask you! Now back to Alfie Farrow.....)

Thank goodness Bing is reported to be making a splendid recovery, with a "spectacular" and other shows with Mitzi Gaynor, Bob Hope and others. This is indeed good news and according to the Daily Mirror of June 1 Bing is in Baja, California playing golf and tennis - which can't be bad at his age! The Mirror also said that Bing is planning a Christmas show, a new album of "oldies" and a trip to London - all confirmed, I see, by his letter to Leslie Gaylor. "In another couple of months," declared Bing, "I shall be as good as new. Great stuff Bing - but take it easy. We want you around for a long, long, time yet.

George Mitchell's Black & Whites gave out some sparkling "Bing" numbers recently, all in one show. "Moon of Manakura", "Blue Shadows & White Gardenias", and "Sing Me A Song of the Islands" (in Hawaiian). Also there was an excellent rendering of "Blue Skies". "Tumbling Tumbleweeds" sounded good, too, when aired by "Sing Something Simple" with a wonderful piano and whistling arrangement. These shows are well worth watching for - they often feature numbers we associate with Bing.

Anglia Television screened MR. MUSIC recently and I had the pleasure of viewing same. I noticed too that ROBIN AND THE SEVEN HOODS is around the various regional TV stations. I hope it comes to our area again. Nice to have ol' blue eyes back; I mean the real one, of course. The repeats of Bing's story on BBC Radio 2 were very welcome though I noticed they altered the quotes on some of them, viz: Part 1 the title was altered, and Part 3 was changed from the original of Road to Hollywood to Road to Success....Part 4 WAS "Bye Bye Blues" but the repeat was entitled "Taking a Tumble". In Part 14, Bing's new single was omitted (Its Not Where You Start). However, the best quote of all, in my view, was that of Jose Ferrer in Part 14:

"Jolson was like Mr. Great Singer of all time, Chevalier was like Mr. Entertainer of all time, Frank Sinatra (excuse me, Reg!) is Mr. Balladeer of all time - but BING CROSBY is MR. EVERYTHING." All those in favour show in the usual fashion! Including Peter Diffley?

At the time of writing these notes I am reading a new paperback called "SINATRA" by

Arnold Shaw - and Bing is mentioned many, many times. A quote by Frankie boy I liked was his answer to a reporter's question: "Frankie, how about Crosby? Looks like you've taken away the play, eh?" Sinatra replied: "Bing was my first singing idol - and he still is. He'll always be tops. For that matter, there's no comparison between us. We're entirely different in style!" 'Nuff said.

Well, that's it for now. Cheerio - and I hope the summer holds up for a good holiday for all.

Thanks Alf - and I hope you get used to Hymerside - I guess you can still claim Leeds and Geoff Boycott as all your own even if they've kicked you out of the Broad Acres! Try and bear up ol' son...and the rest of you up there!

I do wish contributors would not keep mentioning F.... S..... My fingers go stiff and cold and it's a job to type the name....one thing is certain, however, if their styles - Bing's and Sinatra's - were not "entirely different", there would be no Reg Bristo engaged in the pursuit of Crosbyana. I suppose it's getting dangerous for me to go out alone now with all the Sinatra-fans ready to pounce on me.....

BECAUSE OF THE LATE ARRIVAL OF SOME MATERIAL, AND MY WISH TO "INTRODUCE" A NEW WRITER, SOME OF MY USUAL MATERIAL - for instance, BING...ACCOMPANIED BY....IS LEFT OVER THIS TIME. THESE FEATURES ARE BEING INCLUDED IN "REG BRISTO WRITES...." FOR ONE REASON: THEY MERIT INCLUSION.

THIS ISSUE IS SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN HITHERTO IN A DESPERATE EFFORT TO CONSERVE PAPER AND IN THE HOPE THAT THE SITUATION REGARDING SUPPLY WILL IMPROVE. THEN IT WILL BE BACK TO 60 PAGES, PLUS....

MEMBERS OF THE ICC MAY LIKE TO KNOW THAT "BING" IS REGULARLY FILED WITH THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON, AT THEIR REQUEST AND THUS ENTERS THE AMERICAN ARCHIVES.

AND NOW FOR OUR NEW FRIEND: JOHN BIGNELL of WEMBLEY has entered our fold and, in passing, I might mention has kept yours truly answering (or endeavouring to!) a whole cascade of Crosbyana questions, a chore I never mind, incidentally. But he is one of those phenomena - a life-long Bing fan who has been unaware that he is not alone! I'm sure you will read this initial effort of his with as much interest and pleasure as I did.....

JOINING THE ICC - AND REVIVING THIRTY-YEAR-OLD MEMORIES: BY

JOHN BIGNELL

A chance meeting with Derek Roy, the comedian (of Variety Bandbox renown, circa 1944) led to an enquiry at the BBC and a reply from producer Brian Willey who furnished me with the address of Reg Bristo. So in the space of six short weeks I have discovered there is a society of Crosby addicts, become a member of same, and already added extensively to my knowledge of Bing's incomparable output.

What an exhilarating feeling to suddenly become aware that there are thousands of kindred souls of all ages and both sexes all over the world. I may have been singularly unfortunate hitherto but amongst my own host of friends, relatives and acquaintances I have never once met one on the same wavelength when it comes to the subject of Bing Crosby. Even my own wife, although certainly one of the millions who admire and enjoy the work of the Master, could not by any stretch of the imagination, be called a devotee (to be completely frank (ouch!) she prefers Sinatra).

It therefore follows that most of my recollections over the past 30 years and more have remained stored in my subconscious, but with the acquisition of The A-Z of Bing Crosby what a host of private memories have been released. Titles half-forgotten, may be heard just once by chance on radio programmes long ago. Among these I would list: If I Knew

Then, Girl of My Dreams, When the Moon Comes over Madison Square, A Fine Romance, A Man and his Dream, And the Angels Sing, three of my absolute top favourites from MISSISSIPPI, Down by the River, Soon and Its Easy to Remember; East Side of Heaven, Empty Saddles, Gypsy Love Song, I Cried for You, I Have Eyes, I Wish I Were Aladdin, June In January, Learn to Croon, Let's Call a Heart a Heart, Let's Spend an Evening at Home, May I?, Start the Day Right, This is My Night to Dream, Two for Tonight, Without a Word of Warning, and a host of others, much too numerous to mention.

Now, it doesn't take a Sherlock Holmes to detect where my real and abiding interest lies. It is, of course, in that magical decade from 1930 to 1940. This is the period when, as we all know, Bing so far outstripped his rivals that it was almost unfair! I think that to compare say, the rendering of Did You Ever See a Dream Walking? by the average British vocalist, or even the best British vocalist of the day, with the recording made by Bing in 1933 is to sum it all up with no further explanations needed. I remember the first and only time I heard Bing's recording of Red Sails in the Sunset, made in 1935. I had always regarded this as a bit of a joke song, famous as the signature tune of dear old Suzette Tarrie, the comedienne. Then, one Sunday afternoon in the autumn of 1956, purely by chance and whilst listening to a "Down Your Way" programme, one of the interviewees selected this song and Bing's rendering - to say I was staggered is to put it mildly. I hadn't thought it possible to take this song seriously yet here was Bing, proving once again that the most ordinary ballad of the Thirties could become the greatest tune ever written - when placed at his disposal.

I have often thought that to have been aware of Bing when he first made his sensational impact upon the public must have been a tremendous experience. But on reflection, I feel that to come into the picture as I did in the early 'Forties (when I was in my early teens and first became interested in popular music) was the best time. I say this because I am now aware of just how much of Bing's early output I have STILL TO HEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME. By the same token, I feel that some of our younger enthusiasts (and Reg Bristo tells me some of us are still well under 20 years old) may find the sheer volume of undiscovered Bing (undiscovered by them, that is) is just too much to assimilate.

I would be very interested to hear from the "new generation" of Circle members which period they find of the greatest interest. Do you find your enthusiasm concentrated on, say, the post-War period and do you find the pre-War recordings "dated"?

My first excursion to the record shops took place in 1946-7 and I still have a couple of dozen old 78s, many of the titles I now have obtained on microgroove recordings. My collection of LPs is now growing very encouragingly (I have submitted a list of LPs I would dearly like to obtain - in mint condition please - to Reg in the hope that he will be able to include it elsewhere in this issue.

Just to prove I am not completely prejudiced in Bing's favour I do, in fact, have an unfavourite recording, and this is Temptation. I think it is the tune which I find a most turgid dirge and even Bing cannot, for me, rescue this from the depths of mediocrity. Next time I hope to be able to list my half dozen favourite Bing recordings (I want to give myself time to acquire several recordings listed in the A-Z which I have never heard before, before I make my selection. I will not therefore commit myself at this stage further than to say that most of them will have been recorded before 1940.

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An excellent introduction by John, I feel - note how he more or less automatically goes for all the things Crosbyites delight in: favourite records, unfavourite records, which period was the best, songs he's never even heard and so on. It is certainly true that a fair proportion of our membership are young - under 20. Names like Bernard Bruty, Susan Plant, Barry Freestone, Ken Crossland - Mike Crampton has been a member since he was 14 and is still under 30! And what better example, perhaps, than our Editor, John barely to his middle 20's? Of course, we do have a substantial number too who DO remember Bing's first colossal impact when he so revolutionised popular singing.... and mostly the categories take up their own TIME as the best, i.e. the time they got on the roundabout, so to speak. Yet I have also noticed that those youngsters who avow they like the Bing of the 50's, or the 60's, even the 70's, slowly but surely - perhaps inevitably, come to confess that Crosbyana becomes akin to a chain-reaction - that

they now have an abiding interest in what Bing did at the beginning. John Bignell also mentioned the continual / new discoveries one makes in the Crosby field: wait until he finds out he can get tapes - indeed, RECORDS! now - of Bing's fantastic radio shows, not to mention his TV shows! I myself remember Bing since late-1931 but mainly 1932- and there are still some numbers I haven't yet heard Bing sing. Not many - but some. John Bignell will also come to learn that we discuss endlessly the varying accompaniments Bing has had, the other people he has sung with, his fabulous duets, for example with, first, Connee Boswell, then later on with Rosemary Clooney, apart from all the others with whom he had a more fleeting acquaintance - Peggy Lee, for instance. And of the now-legendary records - three only - he made with the Mills Brothers; Fred Astaire, Jolson, Hope, and so many, many others. Truly the Crosby Treasury is bottomless.

Here are the records John Bignell particularly wants: his address is 21, St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex -

Ace of Hearts AH 17 - Old Masters, Vol. 2.
 CBS 66206 - Bing in Hollywood 1930-34, the double set.
 (When I asked for this last year I had many copies offered me so I think John will be lucky at least with this one - and my belated thanks to all those who offered help. Peter Diffley was the one who actually presented me with the 2-album set - it was for yet another reader.)
 CBS 66210 - Bing Crosby Story, Vol 1 - The Early Jazz Years: 2 LP-set.
 HMV DLP 1106 - Salute to Bix.
 Bruns. BING'S HOLLYWOOD: Nos. 1 to 6 incl of the 15-album set.

John says if anyone has these records to sell, or can put him in touch with a stockist who has them he will be very grateful indeed. There is a note elsewhere about the HOLLYWOOD Nos. 1 to 15 set - now proving elusive but which could easily be reissued, it is felt, under the EMI/MCA set-up. I fancy this may depend on the sales response to the records now being issued under the new banner.

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THE PICTURES IN THIS ISSUE (I'M HOPING THEY "COME OUT" ALL-RIGHT!) are two very unusual pictures indeed - probably not seen by many before. The picture of the present-day Bing was supplied by Leslie Gaylor (courtesy of the Daily Express); the second picture was supplied by Jim Ramsay, my near-neighbour in Caerleon, Mon., and is (if you cannot read the signature) of the young Gary Crosby aged 10 months, Bing's first-born and named after Gary Cooper. A picture to set the ladies cooing! Readers may know that it was Gary Cooper who was called upon to present Bing with his "Oscar", awarded to him for his role in "Going My Way". Two vastly different, yet vastly interesting, pictures. Our thanks to Leslie and Jim.

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It is necessary to once more put newer (and younger) members in the picture regarding the ROAD TO BING CROSBY discography. It is now, alas, virtually unobtainable but was originally published in four parts, each taking a separate but consecutive period, in Bing's recording career. There was, too, a fifth part dealing with the "V-Discs" that Bing made. These were records made by top American artists exclusively for the US Armed Forces' entertainment. This was the complete work of Bing's records, containing dates, masters, takes, accompanists, fellow-artists, and record numbers - these numbers including those of ALL labels throughout the world and indeed, where the 78 had subsequently been issued in micro-groove form. This is not designed to make mouths water - though it probably will. It was compiled by an eminent team comprising mainly Fred Reynolds, Bob Roberts, Geoff. Milne, Derek Spruce, and the late Leslie Phythian. That this will be republished some time in the future is fairly certain; but when is not so easy to say. When parts of it DO become available they go at alarming prices.

Meanwhile, readers of BING can be pretty well informed by means of the three publications currently available: The A to Z of Bing Crosby, and The Bing Crosby LP-GRAPHY, (both of these £1 post paid) and the newest project, The Bing Crosby Mini-Discography price 45p post paid. Send remittances to me, Reg Bristo.....

NOW IS THE HOUR! for us to part for another quarter: in passing, we could easily use some record title as the heading for all our pages - see Yes Indeed this issue! We hope you have enjoyed this issue. Your Secretary's warmest congratulations to all those members who have got themselves "on the Air" in the Crosbyana-cause and to all readers for their continuing interest and support. MRS. GRACE LAMBERT, of London E7, has spotted the name "Kathy Lee Crosby" as appearing in cast lists on the TV and wonders if this lady is some relation to our Maestro? And so do I - it is a curious mixture of Christian names in any case. Anyone know?

BING'S MILLION-SELLER DISCS (see p8 this issue) must be considered a fairly sketchy list. It IS the list shewn in various publications, notably the Daily Mail Book of Golden Records. But the authors of this were careful to point out that some of their statistics were based on calculation rather than official figures. No self-respecting Bing fan will ever accept that it was not until Sweet Leilani in 1937 - and taking 7 years to reach a million sales - that Bing achieved this first honour. True, the Hit Parade, or the Top 10 was not the "way of life" it has become in recent years; its also true that there were not the number of record-players, radiograms, etc. per population there are today. Even so, it is impossible to believe that records such as Please, Love in Bloom, June in January, Learn to Croon, Temptation, Pennies from Heaven and many others did not sell a million. Everyone was waiting for the newest Crosby numbers in those days with great eagerness and excitement. Furthermore, as your Secretary knows from personal experience, people WITHOUT radiograms were buying 'em - to play on someone else's equipment! And never let it be forgotten, that in those depression days of the early 30's it was Bing Crosby who not only salvaged record companies, but put them firmly on their respective feet. Speaking of TEMPTATION reminds me that our debutante in these pages, JOHN BIGNELL, confessed that that was his unfavourite number: well, to each his own of course - but coincidentally, a reader of GOLDEN YEARS has recently said the same thing, though he wasn't referring to Bing's rendering. I must say this particular number has ever been one of my favourites. Its dramatic rhythm - bolero, beguine - and its decadent lyrics have always made an impact with me. Furthermore, I thought all Crosby fans thought the same way! Truly, we live and learn. 'Twas ever thus.

GORDON WALL from South Australia writes: Hope I won't fall out with Ken Gray (WSA) over this but he quoted (March '74 issue) "Angels of Mercy (DLA2842A) was issued on a limited issue US 2-lp set BING CROSBY FOR COLLECTORS ONLY." Not so! Angels of Mercy on that set is from a film short No. R46 recorded 24.1.42 also entitled Angels of Mercy. It is an entirely different "take" to the Decca master. The commercial release of this song was in Australia only tho' a limited number were pressed in USA for broadcasting stations to publicise the Red Cross during the War years." Thanks Gordon - the sort of discographic-al news that makes some eyes glow!

MISS P.J.FORSTER (E. Twickenham) ".....glad to read we are contemporaries! My first record was 'The Last Round-Up' - do you remember?.....bought the Basie record last Jan and thought it superb, especially 'Gentle on my Mind', 'Snowbird', and 'Sunrise, Sunset'...

Do I remember! Indeed, I reckon THAT was another million-seller, The Last Round-Up! And its a long road from that to "Snowbird" and Count Basie! So many of us have faithfully trodden that road, never swerving from our devotion to Bing Crosby. Its nice to have Miss Forster with us. We're getting fewer - from Last Roundup days, I mean - not overall! We're growing nicely again now.

SO MANY LETTERS - it gets really tough now, knowing that they have to be omitted. I hope the writers will not be discourage at their omission...for they were, and are, appreciated.

UNLIKELY ADDITION TO CROSBY SHOPPE: If anyone has any records by Los Paraguayos (or similar) - not those currently in shops but older and perhaps deleted - Reg Bristo would be most interested to hear, especially if they are willing to sell.

KEITH HYDE, another celebrated Australian collector, reckon Johnny Mercer didn't really mean it when he said Sinatra "sang the ass off Crosby" - whatever that vulgarity means! It was said during a radio interview - the sort of amiable nonsense that is talked then, considers Keith. He may be right.....

CHEERIO FOR NOW: please renew promptly and help to ensure the future of BING and the ICC.